The Nation.

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EDIT

FOLIE À DEUX

Susan Sontag once said of Cecil B. De Mille, "He has a crazy kind of integrity." So it seemed with Saddam Hussein. And George Bush. Until February 21, the two pit bulls of modern military history seemed committed by the insane logic of their pride to an epic drama of death. Neither would relent, no matter how reasonable the appeal. Both trumpeted a vision of victory drenched with the blood of the other; neither seemed ready to sue for peace until the blood sacrifice had been performed (see Lloyd deMause opposite).

At various points along the way, the fitful diplomatic maneuvers of late February offered clear opportunities for disengagement, for saving lives, even for saving face. But both men proclaimed their resistance to a settlement for no rational interest of state. In deploring the Soviet peace proposal, Bush indicated that he would settle for no less than the kind of plan Henry Morgenthau Sr. once advanced for Nazi Germany: the reduction of the enemy state to a preindustrial, demilitarized, pastoral land.

There was thus no incentive for Saddam to comply. Better that he bloody the American expeditionary force before his inevitable defeat than negotiate his way out of Kuwait and into a bargain. Nevertheless, as we went to press Thursday evening the Russians appeared to have brokered the possibility of peace. Whatever the outcome, the tragedy of this round was the process whereby the two leaders celebrated waste and death and coarsened their people for slaughter. We must remember that all this needn't have happened. Saddam could have saved much more by making a deal last summer or fall. Bush could have had his way with diplomacy, sanctions and the application of true multinational pressure. The world must find ways to insure that this insanity does not happen again.

BOMBING CIVILIANS: A WAR CRIME
Ramsey Clark

IRAQ 1958: THE FIRST INTERVENTION
Micah L. Sifry

A TALK WITH GEORGE SELDES
Morton Mintz

RED SQUADS
Bruce Shapiro

JULIÁN RÍOS
Earl Shorris

ISABEL ALLENDE
Patricia Hart

AMERICA ON THE COUCH

THE GULF WAR AS MENTAL DISORDER

LLOYD DEMAUSE

Although people have become familiar with the notion that the homicidal and suicidal acts of individuals might stem from underlying mental disorders, it is less common to consider the possibility that the homicidal and suicidal acts of entire nations—wars—might also stem from temporary mental disorders. Nevertheless, there is historical evidence for the thesis that the current gulf war is a shared emotional disorder, with diagnostic symptoms, psychodynamics and childhood origins very similar to the disorders that occur in individuals. An understanding of this disorder is particularly crucial in appreciating the emotions connected with any peace overtures.

After Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, visual portrayals of Saddam Hussein in the American news media showed him as a Terrifying Parent, a child abuser intent on hurting the children in his care. An analysis of the emotional content of political cartoons, cover art, headlines and presidential speeches reveals that the Terrifying Parent image was unusually widespread. Saddam was depicted in cartoons as an evil-looking pregnant mother with a nuclear bomb in his womb, as a baby killer and as a child molester. Indeed, most of the outrage about the invasion focused on reports of Iraqi troops executing children before the eyes of their parents and murdering infants in their incubators [see Alexander Cockburn, "Beat the Devil," February 4].

Psychohistorians consider such wide-

(Cont. on p. 302)

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LETTERS.

S&LEIGHT OF HAND

Emeryville, Calif.

I want to thank Robert Sherrill for his outstanding article on the S&L crisis ["S&Ls, Big Banks and Other Triumphs of Capitalism," Nov. 19]. One correction: The $250 million in bonds sold through Lincoln Savings branches were not Lincoln Savings bonds. They were the bonds of the Charles Keating company, American Continental, that owned Lincoln Savings. About 20,000 people, mostly average citizens, were enticed to buy those bonds because Lincoln Savings salespersons led them to believe that the bonds were guaranteed by the assets of Lincoln Savings and the federal government. In fact, the government does not guarantee or insure private corporate bonds. Many of those who bought the American Continental bonds transferred their money from Lincoln Savings accounts to buy those higher-interest bonds, thinking it was a safe, federally insured investment. Those people will probably get back only a fraction of their original investments. *Nicholas Galloro*

AS THE S&L TURNS

Vienna, Va.

Robert Sherrill serves *Nation* readers well with his review of the origins and some of the more technical aspects of the savings and loan catastrophe. It's the most thorough analysis I've yet read. However, Sherrill's attempt to toss the present bailout effort into the same leaky boat that went down during the previous decade may make for tighter drama, but I presume *Nation* readers prefer fact to fiction.

Yes, the bailout financial projections were subject to the same unrealistic scenarios that have characterized all Reagan/Bush budget forecasts. Sure, William Seidman's aggressive defense of federally uninsured big depositors is hard even for most Republicans to defend when programs like Medicare and Head Start are on the table. And most definitely true, the Resolution Trust Corporation's affordable-housing efforts have been a sham. But beyond these charges, Sherrill loses his footing. To allege, as he does, that the difference between former thrift overseer Danny Wall and present bailout chief Seidman is one only of style indicates either a lack of knowledge of the two men's record or a flat-out willingness to lie. Whatever one may think of Seidman's economic views, he's not the banking industry/Bush Administration flak portrayed. Sherrill conveniently doesn't mention how John Sununu has been after Seidman's neck for months because of his refusal to toe the White House line. Nor does he mention the accolades that liberal Democrats on the House Banking Committee such as Charles Schumer regularly pay Seidman for the forthrightness he has shown them.

Sherrill also mentions a host of "vultures," like Pete Peterson and William Simon, circling "R.T.C. meat" for the "big giveaway" that Seidman has prepared. But he neglects to mention that R.T.C. policies have kept such interests away from failed thrifts, limiting the 500-plus acquisitions almost totally to other financial institutions. And although we may not like big banks getting bigger by adding S&L deposits to their bases, I've seen no other entities out there capable of taking them off the government's hands. Does Sherrill have an alternative? Perhaps turning the R.T.C. into a national savings bank? It certainly would seem preferable to move the bailout along quickly and later, in less of a crisis atmosphere, deal with the different problem of consolidation in the banking industry.

As for these banks not acquiring the assets along with the deposits, Sherrill and definitely the Financial Democracy Campaign should know better. The R.T.C. tried for months to have banks take all the junk real estate on failed thrifts' books when bidding on the deposits, but there simply were no takers. Like it or not, the government cannot make a private entity purchase something it doesn't want. Yes, the current policy leaves the R.T.C. in the unwieldy position of owning billions of dollars in property hardly anyone wants, but at least Washington is no longer in the business of balancing thousands of monthly checking account statements for those billions of dollars of deposits the current policy has permitted it to sell.

More? The R.T.C. is trying to sell thrifts before they fail because failure reduces, by most estimates, 20 to 30 percent of the institution's value. If this policy gets a higher price for a bankrupt S&L and reduces my tax bill, I don't know about Sherrill, but I'm for it. And it's not just the R.T.C. that is overriding state branch banking legislation. It is the Congressional act that created the agency that gives it this power. Congress, probably justifiably, thought the need to sell bankrupt thrifts was greater than preserving what many feel are archaic bank branching laws.

I'm especially surprised at Sherrill's taking Seidman to task for saying that the taxpayers deserve the kind of government they vote for. American taxpayers twice gave Ronald Reagan huge mandates to "get government off the backs of the people" and to "turn the private sector loose." That's just what happened in the savings and loan industry. The cost is going to be great—and in an ideal world it would not have to be borne by those of us who knew Reagan to be a snake-oil salesman and voted against him. But at least we can presume that the financial discipline that we all will suffer will make those who in 1980, 1984 and 1988 hearkened to the siren's song a little more resistant. I'm not crying for the "taxpayers." Those millions of them who voted for Morning in America are getting what they deserve.

And I would take Sherrill to task for the utter lack of constructiveness in his approach to the bailout. The individuals who are running the Resolution Trust Corporation may not be quoting Proudhon about property being theft as Sherrill may like. But for Chrissake, this is the U.S.A. What does he expect? Most of the top R.T.C. officials are, from what I've seen and heard—and I've spoken with many of them—incredibly dedicated public officials who are no less sickened by the debacle that they are trying to clean up than is Sherrill. *David Raphael Smith, editor*
RTC Property Disposition Report

NOTHING TO SLEAZE AT

Washington

Robert Sherrill's S&L article is chock-full of false and misleading statements about the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, its Chair, William Seidman, and the Resolution Trust Corporation, which is managed by the F.D.I.C. Here are just a few of the facts your readers deserve to know:

1. The article says that Seidman displays "a cozy attitude toward the owners of financial institutions" and that he "wants the taxpayers to foot the bill" for the S&L industry's problems. In fact, Seidman has led efforts to boost bank capital requirements, hold more on-site examinations and raise the fees banks pay for deposit insurance. He has expressed outrage at the tab taxpayers must pay for the S&L crisis and has vowed that the banks, not the taxpayers, will pay the approximately $10 billion or more needed to recapitalize the Bank Insurance Fund. Under Seidman, the F.D.I.C. and the R.T.C. also have filed record numbers of lawsuits against officers, directors and others whose acts led to the downfall of institutions. Does this sound like a regulator who is "cozy" with the industry at the expense of the taxpayer?

2. Seidman and the F.D.I.C. had absolutely nothing to do with the design of the Southwest Plan or the negotiations to sell individual thrifts like Bluebonnet Savings. The sales were arranged entirely by the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation, a government agency separate from the F.D.I.C.

3. The article criticizes the R.T.C. for allowing buyers of failed thrifts to "pick over their assets, keep the good ones and return the bad ones to the government." Since Congress did not intend for private investors to lose their shirts helping Uncle Sam sort through the rubble of the S&L mess, it is only fair that purchasers of these S&Ls be given the time needed to review the assets. The R.T.C. has decided that the least costly approach is to sell the S&Ls first and then allow the purchasers to review the assets and return the ones they don't want to purchase. Considering the ghastly quality of many of these assets, it should come as no surprise if some or all of the assets are returned.

4. The article says that the F.D.I.C. has been guaranteeing deposits over the $100,000

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EDITORIALS.

Patriot Fallout

Not all the missiles of the Middle East have fallen within their range of record. Pieces of Patriots—or are they shards of Scuds?—land on unexpected targets vast distances from their launch: on the New Rochelle school superintendent who balked at yellow-ribbonizing his district, on the Kutztown, Pennsylvania, newspaper editor who was fired for his editorial "How About a Little PEACE!", on the Seton Hall University basketball star Marco Lokar who was booed back to his native Italy for refusing to sew an American flag on his shorts, on the Jordanian-American in New Jersey whose house was invaded by patriots unknown who left a yellow ribbon on the TV, on the Arab student at the University of Denver who was slashed outside a supermarket, on others of Arab descent subjected to violence.

The latest collateral victim of the bombs over Baghdad, in a manner of speaking, is actress Vanessa Redgrave, who was fired from her starring role in the upcoming national tour of a Broadway play, *Lettice and Lovage*. Redgrave got on the Shubert Organization's blacklist for making a statement at a peace rally in Barcelona (three days before the gulf war started) in defense of Iraq "against American, British or Israeli troops."

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Press reports made it seem as if Redgrave supported the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, a charge she denied in an advertisement in *The New York Times* that made the nice distinctions of political position but obviously did not silence the pro-war press or calm the theatrical impresarios who feared audience attrition. On the same day the ad appeared, *Times kulturkämpfer* Richard Bernstein weighed in with an alleged news story that repeated the erroneous quote and indeed had the effect of advancing the campaign against the actress.

Redgrave was bombed not only because she's antiwar (like the man who disturbed Bush's prayers in a Kennebunkport church, or the youth who immolated himself on the Amherst, Massachusetts, common); she is pro-Palestinian and a fan of the P.L.O. Nearly nine years ago, in a time of Reaganite peace, those beliefs got her fired from a gig with the Boston Symphony. It may be a long time before she performs again in this unforgiving land.

In life-and-death terms, the American or European targets of patriotic repression have suffered little compared with those under attack by the surgical-strike forces and the mad bombers over Iraq and Kuwait. It's not quite the same thing to give up a starting position on the Seton Hall Five as to wake up dead in a smoldering shelter in Baghdad. But the effect of the war on the American social and political culture can be devastating in its own way. The war has already closed some of the space for dissent, which had been widening rather impressively since the middle of Reagan's tour of duty. The permanent opposition in America has made more progress than it sometimes sees: in stymieing a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua, in beating back assaults on women's reproductive rights, in mounting progressive and multicultural electoral campaigns, and much more.

The war will frustrate many attempts to widen the liberated areas of our lives, but it offers the social managers no final solution to the problem of dissent in the lands they rule. Yellow-ribbonism is disgusting, but it is not totalitarian. There's a point to fighting back, not only to stop the war against the Iraqis but to lift the siege against us.

CRITICS' CHOICE

Let's congratulate Arthur C. Danto, whose book *Encounters and Reflections: Art in the Historical Present* won a National Book Critics Circle award for criticism. The citation reads: "Arthur C. Danto, art critic of *The Nation* magazine, has become a guide for the perplexed in an era when art seems so often to be disguised philosophy and philosophy disguised art. Invariably reasonable but just as invariably provocative, Danto's concise critical essays are the model of what criticism must attempt in the 1990s."

Also, Richard Lingeman's *Theodore Dreiser: An American Journey* was chosen Book of the Year by the Chicago *Sun-Times*'s Book Week.

Signs of Dissent

Despite censorship by Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Israel and the United States, one medium has eluded all attempts to control and manipulate it—the protest sign. Herewith, the people's answer to the soundbite (as seen at an antiwar rally in Los Angeles):

RICH PEOPLE'S OIL/POOR PEOPLE'S BLOOD
GEORGE BUSH IS HAVING A WARGASM
A KINDER, GENTLER BLOODBATH
WAR IS GOOD BUSINESS—INVEST YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER
DAN QUAYLE—STILL PROUD TO GIVE YOUR LIFE FOR HIS COUNTRY
I'M TIRED OF BEING AMBUSHED AND SADDAMIZED
FIGHT POVERTY AND RACISM, NOT IRAQ
MILITARY SOLUTIONS ARE THE PROBLEM
NOT IN MY NAME, NOT WITH MY MONEY
SAVE THE REPUBLIC/STOP THE EMPIRE
ANTI-WAR NOT ANTI-AMERICAN
PRO-AMERICAN/ANTI-WAR
ANOTHER NICE JEWISH GIRL FOR PEACE
HEALTH CARE NOT WARFARE
FREE KUWAIT? HOW ABOUT LEONARD PELTIER?
IMPEACH WIMPY AND CHICKEN LITTLE
SUPPOSE KUWAIT'S MAIN PRODUCT WAS BROCCOLI
WISE POLICY NOT SMART BOMBS
"BEWARE THE MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX"—EISENHOWER
"THOU SHALT NOT KILL"—GOD
HOW MANY TIMES MUST THE CANNONBALLS FLY?
BEWARE OF YOUR TV—THINK FOR YOURSELF
EDUCATE DON'T DETONATE
WAR IS NO VIDEO GAME
GIVE ESTROGEN A CHANCE
READ MY APOCALYPSE
MOMS AGAINST BOMBS

Briefingspeak

Q: General, could you give us your sense of where Desert Storm stands right now?

A: Yes sir, we have an ongoing armed situation at this time and we're seeing some serious coalition force projection in the K.T.O. We have I.D.'d hostiles coming across and have taken a number of E.P.W.s. I'm sorry, I can't give you any information about coalition K.I.A.s, M.I.A.s or P.O.W.s, and because of heavy SAM activity I can't give you any accurate B.D.A. But I do know that each of our men, and, of course, women, will be glad to get back on his, or her, A.P.C. or humvee and get back to the K.S.A. to sit down to a good hot M.R.E.

We have terminated battlefield preparation and significantly degraded the enemy's logistical sustainment capabilities. Sorties now number 100,000. We have rendered a number of his fixed wings inoperative and one helicopter is reported lased during an intercept while in hover status in Indian country.

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This kill is confirmed in a standard voice message from our Tomcat pilot: "Cold, cold, smoked the bitch." The enemy's aerial assets, then, are no longer a factor in the package, although surface engagements do continue at this hour between hostiles and friendlies.

We continue to aggressively pursue maritime interdiction and counter-Scud missions. The take from our intelligence platforms tells us that we have had optimum results against some very lucrative targets, though we still see a lot of potential out there. Put it another way, this is still a target-rich environment. We continue to lay down a steady volume of chaff and other ordnance in defense suppression operations against his Triple-A and other systems.

Between zero-five and zero-seven today allied smart bombs achieved very significant terrain alteration. Because of our belief in the sanctity of human life, we have attrited his main force in a surgical operation that has gone the extra mile to avoid collateral damage, though of course you're always going to break some eggs. We're particularly happy with the enhancement of favorable ground conditions as a result of the destruct radius of the Maverick and the force multipliers on the Tomahawks. Coalition personnel-loss minimization remains positive. We've all heard rumors this morning, I know, of significant numbers of human remains pouches as a consequence of friendly fire, but that's a negative. I have no information to give you on that and I can't discuss why I'm not discussing it because then I'd be discussing it.

Ongoing templating of the theater by our Awacs lets us see how much terrain has been craterized and what percentage of the dictator's fixed assets still remains for our aviation elements to rubble-ize. Also, I'd just like to add a word here to say how proud we all are of our systems performance—the Patriot and Hellfire, as you know, have taken out much of the enemy's offensive capability, while the Stealth, Warthog and Wild Weasel continue to transit his defensive alignments and allow us to diagram his intentions. Our pilots say there's so much traffic out there it's like standing on the median of the Interstate watching the hostiles scurry like cockroaches when the kitchen light is flipped on. As for our lead ground forces, they continue to haul ass and bypass, as our Pentagon greensuiters like to say, and they will be kicking some butt preparatory to cutting off the enemy's head.

Let me sum up then: Our game plan is right on schedule. We've been training for the Super Bowl for six months and now it's game time and we're already at the opposition's 5-yard-line. We told him to move it or lose it, and I'm happy to report that we're fighting on a level playing field. If he throws us a curveball in terms of anything unconventional, we'll be ready to hunker down in a mission-oriented protective posture. But I feel comfortable that we're facing the bottom of his order and anything he throws at us we're going to hit straight into the bleachers. Could we drop the big one if this goes into extra innings? I'd like to refer you to the White House on that one.

We've been sent here by our Commander in Chief to do a job, and we're all good to go at this hour. I'm comfortable that we can get the job done and go home to commence building the New World Order.

Q: General, in an essay I wrote in 1946, I said that the English language had become "ugly and inaccurate because our thoughts are foolish." I said that I believed words and meaning had parted company, and I also pointed out that "in our time, political speech and writing are largely the defense of the indefensible." Would you like to comment on that, sir?

A: I'm sorry, Mr. Orwell, I think I'd prefer not to get into that one since it might reveal too much about our intelligence capabilities.

GEORGE BLACK

A War Crime

As the number of U.S. bombing sorties against Iraq, including its cities, approached 10,000, it became clear that civilian casualties would be high. In January I first urged Abdul Amir al-Anbari, Iraq's Ambassador to the United Nations, and several other contacts to seek authorization for U.S. and European news media representatives to enter Iraq to assess civilian casualties and damage. As an alternative, I offered to go myself with a camera crew. Four days later word came that a camera crew and I would be permitted into Iraq.

(*Continued on Page 308*)

★

EUREKA!

The drug trade will stop.
The hungry will feast.
And peace will break out
Throughout the Mideast.
The homeless will get
The homes of their dreams,
While Japanese ride
In Cutlass Supremes.
Our school kids will have
Einsteinian skills,
Plus bodies to match
The Buffalo Bills.
Our cities rebuilt,
Our streets all secured,
Goodwill will return.
Oh, AIDS will be cured.
It all can be done,
The White House maintains:
We just cut the tax
On capital gains.

Calvin Trillin

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

On December 28 last, I pulled a long face as I cut out and kept a front-page story by the Washington bureau chief of the *Los Angeles Times*, the sagacious and well-connected Jack Nelson. The article concerned the coming war as it would be fought at home. It reported a conversation with "two officials involved with Bush in Persian Gulf strategy." I cut it out because I thought I might be needing it:

> The officials said Bush assumes that the American public will be mainly concerned about the number of U.S. casualties, not the tens of thousands of Iraqis who stand to die or be maimed in a massive air assault, and that even the killing of thousands of civilians—including women and children—probably would not undermine American support for the war effort.

As I write, the opinion polls show that a well-fed public more or less believes that there was a mass suicide in a Baghdad bunker, orchestrated with the fell purpose of making George look, and Barbara feel, bad. This filthy plot, which unfolded just a day short of qualifying to call itself the St. Valentine's Day Provocation, was thwarted by American resolve. Three days before it, Dick Cheney and Colin Powell were photographed as they wrote jaunty inscriptions on the casings of about-to-be-used bombs. In the hours after it, Marlin Fitzwater opined solemnly that certain Iraqis had a different attitude toward death. (Do you notice that this usually means that the speaker has a different attitude toward the death of Iraqis?)

Of course, from the renowned "progressive" and humanistic viewpoint long espoused by this magazine, it is regrettable that George Bush can be as right in his bet on public opinion as he was in the Willie Horton matter. But if we are honest, we will admit that we already knew that. To possess an empire, it is necessary to be tough and resilient. The public must in principle be ready at all times to display an unflinching stoicism, a stern willingness to endure the suffering of complete strangers. Without this resolute quality, the entire concept of "peace through strength" would become a hollow thing. The contemptible "peace movement" had even conceded this in advance by agreeing with the White House managers that any speech not containing the disgusting words "body bag" would put a needless strain on cognitive capacity among the consumers.

But the coarsening of domestic public opinion, like the cretinization of the mass media, will serve only in the short term. There is still the arena of politics to be contested. After all, if you had asked the yellow-ribbon sob sisters ten years ago whether they would expect a United States expedition to the Persian Gulf to risk everything in order to restore *Iran* to its position as master of the region, they might well have answered no. Yet that is precisely what is now happening. Having relied on a policy of divide-and-rule in the region, Washington must not be surprised if there is also a faction fight within its own policy establishment, a fight that occurs at a level of much greater sophistication than the peaceniks can boast.

Currently, the clear winners are the Iran/*contra* veterans who always based their strategy on a triad consisting of the Iranian "moderates," the Israeli right and the Saudi royal family. Oliver North must be giggling even more than he spontaneously does when he sees Teheran propose itself as "mediator" and prepare, with Israel and the Saudis, to reap the benefits from a shattered Iraq. Henry Kissinger, who has also been a longtime pro-Iranian, can likewise award himself an extra smirk. But it's interesting to see who dissents. There are still those in the nation's capital who know that you have got to have some Arabs, even some nationalist ones, however unpalatable the prospect may be, and who tremble at the unforeseen outcome of this war as it affects America's Arab sphere.

Probably the best known of these is Zbigniew Brzezinski, who has been arguing strenuously that we had better not destroy or eviscerate Iraq since we may need it again if only (yellow ribbons please note) as a counterweight to Iran. On a recent *Crossfire* show he went so far as to say that the whole war could have been avoided if the Administration had not sabotaged the Algerian peace initiative. At this there was some shuffling of the feet among the State Department "insiders."

Algeria, after all, is not one of those disposable towel-head nations that, like Qaddafi's Libya, are on the outs with us one day and in the fold the next. It was the Algerians who brokered the release of the U.S. Embassy hostages in Teheran. It was the Algerians who mediated the Shatt-al-Arab dispute between Iraq and Iran, losing in the process their own Foreign Minister, Mohammed Benyahia, who was shot down over Iranian airspace by persons unknown. Algeria hosted the Palestinian summit in 1988, which extended de facto recognition to the Jewish state.

When the record of this contrived war is told in all its discreditable origins, the insulting treatment accorded President Bendjedid of Algeria will form an important element in the story. At an early stage Algiers had sent its Foreign Minister to Baghdad and arranged terms of mutuality—an Iraqi commitment to leave Kuwait if the army was not attacked from the air or the land *after* doing so—that have formed the basis of all subsequent proposals. Algerian diplomats have told me that they do not consider the question of Palestine to be "*organically* linked" to the question of Kuwait (as indeed it is not) but that a few gestures from the United States about Palestinian rights, to which it was in any case committed in advance, might not have been misinterpreted. Yet Bendjedid, considered the Arab world's senior mediator, was denied the chance to land his plane in Saudi Arabia and was cold-shouldered in all his efforts to visit Washington. He recently told the Algerian Parliament that he felt rebuffed and embarrassed.

This retrospective vindication of Oliver North—the national security extremists in Israel inviting the pro-expulsion Molodet Party into the government; the mullahs in Teheran waiting for their share; the House of Saud resplendent—will be remembered in the Arab world even longer than the mass graves in Baghdad.

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ARYEH NEIER

After Pearl Harbor, when the exclusion from the West Coast and subsequent internment of Japanese-Americans was being debated, the question was raised whether there was any evidence that they had assisted the enemy. None was produced, but this did not deter the proponents of exclusion, among them California Attorney General Earl Warren. It only showed how wily the Japanese-Americans were, Warren told a Congressional hearing.

Warren went on to become a great champion of civil liberties following his appointment to the Supreme Court more than a decade later, and before that he expressed regret over his shabby performance with respect to the Japanese-Americans. Many years later, the U.S. government officially apologized to the survivors of internment and is now providing them with modest monetary damages. Yet the reasoning that proponents of internment used fifty years ago is alive and well, at least among the judiciary of America's foremost ally in the gulf war, Great Britain.

On February 6, Britain's Court of Appeal rejected judicial review of the grounds for internment and deportation of Palestinians, Iraqis and others of Arab descent living in Britain. Since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, the British authorities have issued notices of deportation to 167 Iraqis, Palestinians, Lebanese and Yemenis. Some seventy-eight have been deported or have left following detention. Most were sent to Jordan. At this writing, at least eighty-two Iraqis and Palestinians are being held in prisons and prisoner of war camps in Britain. A handful of those who were detained have been released.

The internees petitioning the court had sought an explanation that went beyond the bland assertion that they had been deprived of liberty for "purposes of national security." Speaking for the court, Lord Justice Donaldson stated that evidence of wrongdoing was not necessary in their case because "those who are able most effectively to undermine national security are those who least appear to constitute any risk to it." In other words, apparent innocence is the best indication of guilt.

Abbas Shiblak, the Palestinian who brought the case to the Court of Appeal, is among those who have now been released. Although their lordships refused to rule in his behalf, the publicity that accompanied his appeal was more effective, and the Home Office, which had ordered his detention, decided to release him.

Shiblak, 47, was born in Haifa, studied law in Cairo and obtained a Ph.D. in economics in Britain. He and his wife have lived in Britain for sixteen years, and he is in the process of obtaining British citizenship. His two children are British citizens. For the past six years he has been employed by the Arab League as a researcher and information officer. He has also been a leader of the London branch of the Arab Organization for Human Rights, a Cairo-based group that denounces abuses of human rights by all Arab governments. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, Shiblak circulated a petition condemning the invasion.

A crucial factor in the release of Shiblak was the "Jewish lobby" in his behalf. Shiblak is the author of a 1986 book on the migration of Iraqi Jews to Israel; an advocate of Palestinian-Jewish dialogue; a contributor to the weekly *Jewish Quarterly*; and—perhaps most important in securing his release—a friend of Simon Louvish, a British-Israeli novelist who is an editor of *Jewish Quarterly*. Louvish launched a campaign for his friend and wrote in the London *Independent*, which has condemned the detentions editorially:

> I freely confess I played the "Jew card" for Abbas for all it was worth. The lawyers helped by producing two more Jews as witnesses for the . . . hearing [an *in camera* proceeding at which the detainee is not told the accusations or evidence against him, and at which his lawyers cannot be present]. We stuffed Jews up their nostrils. We plugged Jews in their ears. We pushed Jews into every orifice until they reeled with embarrassment.

The great majority of the detainees and deportees are not so fortunate to have credentials like those of Shiblak or a friend like Simon Louvish who is willing and able to mount such a media campaign for them. Shiblak's case demonstrates that it is a travesty to rely on a body like the British Home Office to make such decisions with the aid of a panel that holds hearings behind closed doors, without requiring evidence that is subjected to examination and cross-examination.

Thirty-five Iraqis among the detainees—two men who were in Britain under a military exchange program and thirty-three students—are being held as prisoners of war. As Middle East Watch has pointed out, this violates international law because "they are not combatants nor were they captured assisting combatants in the field of battle. In the absence of any information from the British government that these thirty-three students were lawful combatants authorized by Iraqi authorities to participate directly in hostilities . . . the students presumptively should be accorded civilian status." Britain has rightfully joined the United States in denouncing Iraq's violation of the Third Geneva Convention in its treatment of captured pilots. Yet the British courts are unwilling even to consider their own government's refusal to abide by the Third Geneva Convention in the detention of the Iraqi students as P.O.W.s.

As I write, details are beginning to emerge about the horrifying slaughter of civilians in the "bunker" in Baghdad. For now, not one of the American or British spokespersons I have heard has even called this bombing a mistake. To the extent that they have ascribed blame it is only to Saddam Hussein. His sins do not relieve the United States of its legal and moral duty to minimize harm to civilians. If this is a "just war," as even some skeptics about its wisdom have asserted, it is not only the causes of the war that must be considered. It is also the manner in which it is fought and the manner in which the combatants behave toward those under their control. Lord Justice Donaldson and those whose only response to the bombing of Iraqi civilians is to denounce Saddam Hussein for placing them in harm's way are helping to insure that however just the cause, this is a dirty war.

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ARTICLES.

IRAQ, 1958 TO THE PRESENT

America, Oil and Intervention

MICAH L. SIFRY

Why is the United States in the Persian Gulf? "What is at stake is far more than a matter of economics or oil," President Bush insists. "What is at stake is whether the nations of the world can take a common stand against aggression . . . whether we live in a world governed by the rule of law or by the law of the jungle." We will probably not learn the real reasons for this intervention for years, until some future Daniel Ellsberg comes forward or when the classified documents and cables revealing the Administration's thinking are released.

But this isn't the first time the United States moved thousands of troops and the machines of war into the Middle East in response to events in Iraq. Nor is this the first time national security planners contemplated using force to defend Kuwait. In the summer of 1958 they did both of those things. At that time, the deployment of 14,000 troops to Lebanon to shore up its pro-Western government was viewed as another episode in the ongoing cold war; the operation was triggered by an anti-Western coup in Iraq and supposedly focused on blocking Communist designs on Lebanon. But as recently released high-level documents show, the United States intervention had no more to do with the rights of small nations, opposition to aggression, dictators on the loose or a new world order than we suspect it does now.

On July 14, 1958, a group of Communists, nationalists and Nasserists overthrew the British-installed Iraqi regime of Premier Nuri as Said, setting off tremors throughout the region and calls for assistance from the pro-Western governments of Lebanon and Jordan. In *The New York Times*, Iraq was described as an "irreplaceable source of oil," the "keystone of the Baghdad Pact" (a British-inspired alliance of Turkey, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran and Britain) and "the last bastion of Western influence" in the region. Indeed, Said had been an eager and active participant in a covert British-American effort to depose the left-leaning government of Syria that had been foiled the year before. The coup was deemed a "severe blow" to U.S. prestige, and it was assumed that Nasser or the Russians, or both, were behind it. Furthermore, it was reported that the British were worried about "the possibility of a coup in the oil-rich Sheikdom of Kuwait" and were discussing "armed intervention in Iraq." How did the United States react?

When news of the takeover reached Washington on the morning of the 14th, a group led by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, Gen. Nathan Twining, Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles met at the State Department to discuss their options before briefing President Eisenhower. According to a Memorandum for the Record titled "Meeting re Iraq," the group agreed that if the United States did nothing

> (1) Nasser would take over the whole area;
> (2) the United States would lose influence not only in the Arab States of the Middle East but in the area generally, and our bases throughout the area would be in jeopardy;
> (3) the dependability of United States commitments for assistance in the event of need would be brought into question throughout the world.

The memo continues, "General Twining felt that in these circumstances we had no alternative but to go in." The rest of that paragraph was deleted, but according to William Quandt, a senior staff member of the National Security Council in the 1970s who has written a careful analysis of the Lebanon episode in *Force Without War*, Twining had proposed an "area-wide counteroffensive" that would have sent the United States into Lebanon, Britain into Iraq and Kuwait, Israel into the West Bank of Jordan and Turkey into Syria. The memo further reports that "Mr. [Donald] Quarles [Acting Secretary of Defense] attached great importance to having a United Nations or other 'umbrella' under which to operate so as to give adequate moral sanction to our action." And it concludes with the assessment that "intervention involves the risk of general war" with the Soviet Union, but that "we should face the risk now as well as any time."

Fortunately, Eisenhower did not rush to embrace General Twining's proposal, even though British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan was urging similar action. Fears of a pro-Nasser wave sweeping the region were certainly real among the Western leaders. Aside from the loss of bases and credibility, the West stood to lose control over some very important oil concessions. And access to oil was the crucial factor in deciding the course of both world wars. In 1958 Kuwait was the leading Middle East oil producer, at about 1.15 million barrels a day (mbd). There the concession was shared equally by British Petroleum and Gulf Oil. Saudi Arabian oil, pumped by the Arab American Oil Company (Aramco), a consortium of four American oil companies, accounted for another 1 mbd. An international group divided Iran's output of .85 mbd. In Iraq the British and French governments both owned close to one-quarter of the Iraq Petroleum Corporation, which produced .7 mbd. At the time, oil companies shared their profits on a fifty-fifty basis with their host governments. The $200 million that Iraq received from the I.P.C. amounted to half its annual revenues. Indeed, popular resentment against Britain's exploitation of Iraq's resources fueled the coup against Said's regime.

When Eisenhower met with his advisers at noon on the 14th, his first concern was how to respond to an urgent plea from Camille Chamoun, the Christian President of Lebanon—though the Persian Gulf was very much on his mind, as we shall see. Early in 1957, the United States had announced that it would defend any country in the Middle East "requesting

Thanks to Irene Gendzier, Noam Chomsky and William Quandt for supplying historical documents.

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assistance against armed aggression from any country controlled by international communism," a step it took to counter potential radical gains in the wake of the British-French reversal the United States had engineered at Suez the year before. Chamoun had been the only Middle Eastern leader to endorse what became known as the Eisenhower Doctrine, and he had been quietly calling for help for months. Ever since Chamoun had won an overwhelming victory in the 1957 Lebanese legislative elections—thanks in good part to suitcases of money delivered by C.I.A. operative Wilbur Crane Eveland—he had been under attack by Muslim and Druse leaders for having tipped Lebanon too far to the West. In the spring of 1958, this dissent began to spill into the streets, in a dress rehearsal for the civil war that tore Lebanon apart seventeen years later. Even before the July 14 coup in Iraq, Eisenhower had been inclined to move into Lebanon to show U.S. resolve, despite the lack of evidence of international Communist subversion. Now, as he wrote in his memoir *Waging Peace*, "the time had come to act."

There were two prongs to Eisenhower's intervention: the very public landing of 14,000 troops to defend the "integrity and independence" of a small nation, Lebanon, in tandem with a British deployment of several thousand troops into Jordan, and some serious saber rattling in the Persian Gulf to impress the Iraqis, Russians and Egyptians, as well as the British, that the United States meant business.

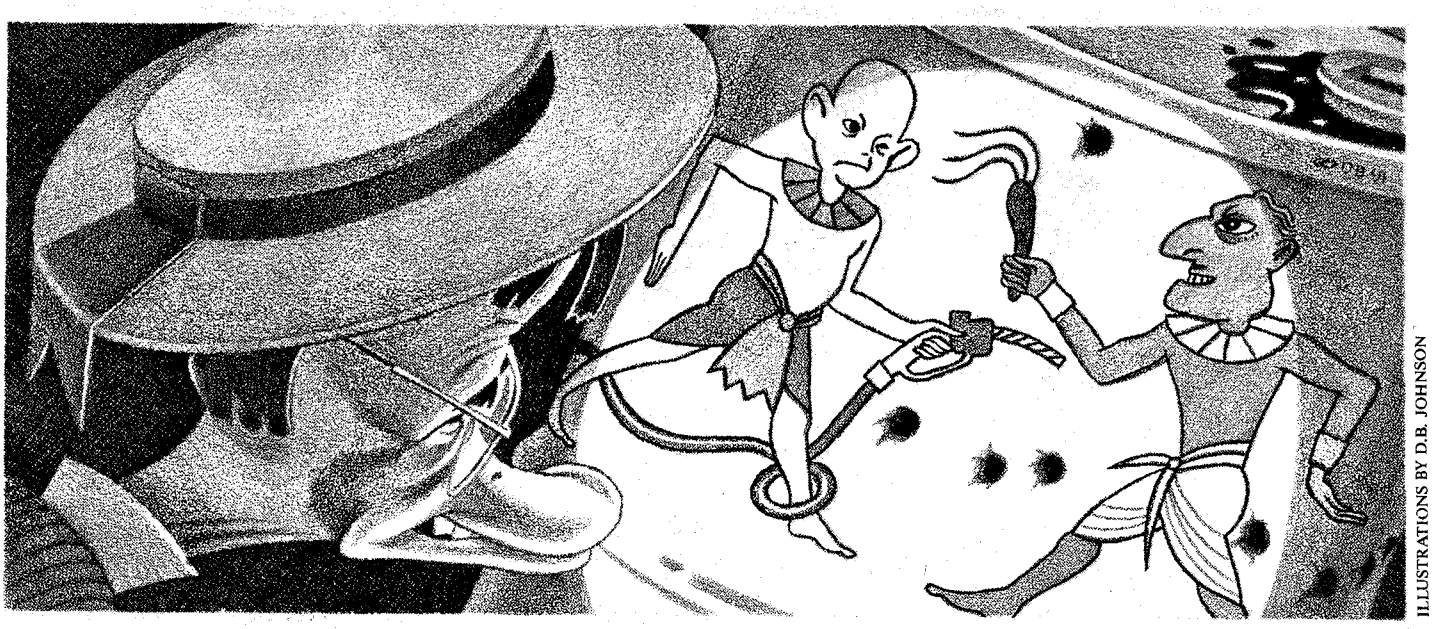
In his message to Congress, Eisenhower justified the U.S. action by claiming that "events in Iraq demonstrate a ruthlessness of aggressive purpose which tiny Lebanon cannot combat without further evidence of support from friendly nations." At the United Nations, U.S. ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge declared that Lebanon was the victim of "indirect aggression," and he drew parallels to Italy's invasion of Ethiopia, Germany's annexation of Austria and the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia. As Quandt puts it, "Nothing was said of broad concerns with Iraq, oil, or the Arab-Israeli conflict. For public purposes this was a Lebanese crisis, behind which communism's malign influence could be detected." The Soviet Union and the non-aligned countries were quick to condemn the American and British moves as Western imperialism, and a banner headline in *The New York Times* ominously reported, "Soviet Charges Move Threatens New War."

Until the makeup and intentions of the new Republic of Iraq became clear, "general war" was a real possibility. Eisenhower ordered a worldwide military alert of U.S. forces and the Strategic Air Command, the *Times* reported that an "atomic unit" based in Germany had been dispatched to Lebanon, and the Russians began large-scale maneuvers along their border with Turkey and Iran. Historians disagree on whether the Lebanon and Jordan deployments were intended to give the West the ability to take further action in Iraq or in the Persian Gulf. While Quandt argues that the intervention was always meant to be a limited one, Harvard scholar Nadav Safran writes in *Saudi Arabia: The Ceaseless Quest for Security* that the troops were moved "to be in a position to intervene in Iraq if the opportunity arose."

Certainly, Iraq's threat to the oil-rich sheikdoms of the gulf was taken very seriously. On the first day of the crisis, Eisenhower ordered a Marine Corps regimental combat team based in Okinawa to the gulf "to guard against a possible Iraqi move into Kuwait," he writes in *Waging Peace*. In addition, he recalls, "I instructed General Twining to be prepared to employ, subject to my personal approval, *whatever* means might become necessary to prevent any unfriendly forces from moving into Kuwait." [Emphasis in original.] According to Quandt, who interviewed several of the American principals, "It seems clear that Eisenhower was referring to the possible use of nuclear weapons, an issue that was discussed several times during the crisis."

Newly uncovered documents from the British Public Record Office and the N.S.C. give undeniable evidence of what was behind the British and American actions. Here is an excerpt from a July 19, 1958, cable sent by Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd from the British Embassy in Washington back to London:

> They [the U.S. government] are assuming that we will take firm action to maintain our position in Kuwait. They themselves are



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disposed to act with similar resolution in relations to the Aramco oilfields in the area of Dahran. . . . They assume that we will also hold Bahrain and Qatar, come what may. They agree that at all costs these oilfields must be kept in Western hands.

In an undated but contemporaneous N.S.C. report on "Issues Arising Out of the Situation in the Near East," American security planners carefully assessed the pros and cons of military action:

Should the United States be prepared to support, or if necessary assist, the British in using force to retain control of Kuwait and the Persian Gulf?

1. *The argument for such action*: An assured source of oil is essential to the continued economic viability of Western Europe. . . . If Nasser obtains dominant influence over the Persian Gulf oil producing areas, Western access to this oil might be seriously threatened. The only way to guarantee continued access to Persian Gulf oil on acceptable terms is to insist on maintaining the current concessions.

2. *The argument against such action*: If armed force must be used to help retain this area (or even if there is a public indication of willingness to use force), the benefits of any actions in the direction of accommodation with radical Pan-Arab nationalism will be largely lost and U.S. relations with neutral countries elsewhere would be adversely affected. Such accommodation would better provide the basis for continued assurance of access to Kuwait and Persian Gulf oil.

Note the focus on quelling or controlling the forces of Arab nationalism, and the absence of the Soviet bogyman. At that stage of the cold war, the United States had an overwhelming edge over the Soviet Union. For all his threatening bluster, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev had done little to help Egypt during the Suez crisis. Apparently Eisenhower understood that, and after some angry speeches at the U.N., the superpower confrontation generated by the Lebanon deployment rapidly cooled down.

The Iraqis also understood, then, the limits of their revolution. On July 18, 1958, a *Times* headline announced, "West to Keep Out of Iraq Unless Oil Is Threatened." Eisenhower and Lloyd had met and, as Dana Adams Schmidt reported in the paper of record, decided that "for the time being . . . intervention will not be extended to Iraq as long as the revolutionary government in Iraq respects Western oil interests."

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Dutifully, later that day Baghdad Radio announced Iraq's intentions to "respect its obligations." Once the feared move on the West's oil was averted, the supposed threat to the Chamoun government shrank in importance. Eisenhower sent Robert Murphy, a career diplomat, to Beirut, where he "quickly concluded that communism had nothing to do with the crisis in Lebanon," writes Quandt. A successor to Chamoun acceptable to all sides was found in the person of Gen. Fuad Chehab, head of the Lebanese Army. Ironically, in a communication to the U.S. government months earlier, Nasser had proposed precisely this solution to Lebanon's internal political crisis.*

Thus what followed the coup in Iraq and the landing of troops in Beirut was a new understanding of the rules of the Middle East game: Political changes were possible as long as economic interests were safeguarded. And the United States—not Great Britain—would decide which moves were acceptable and which should be blocked. An N.S.C. report dated November 4, 1958, neatly encapsulates official thinking on the region:

Be prepared, when required, to come forward with formulas designed to reconcile vital Free World interests in the area's petroleum resources with the rising tide of nationalism in the area. . . . Be prepared to use force, but only as a last resort . . . to insure that the quantity of oil available from the Near East on reasonable terms is sufficient, together with oil from other sources, to meet Western Europe's requirements, recognizing that this course will cut across the courses of action envisioned above toward Arab nationalism and could not be indefinitely pursued.

In a parenthetical remark buried in a footnote, our anonymous N.S.C. planner adds that a study was being done on the "feasibility over the longer term" of reducing the "dependence" of the West on Middle Eastern oil.

In the thirty-three years since this episode, the United States has tried a variety of "formulas" aimed at protecting its interests in the region while "accommodating" Arab nationalism. The leaders of Jordan, Egypt, Morocco and Lebanon have been protected (and spied upon) by C.I.A.-trained security units, as Bob Woodward revealed in *Veil*; for twenty years Jordan's King Hussein even received annual stipends from the agency. Surrogates for U.S. power, like the Shah of Iran and the Israelis, have been armed and given broad latitude, and everybody else with money—regardless of his despotic ways—was sold weapons as well. A peace agreement that removed the major threat of another Arab-Israeli war was brokered between Egypt and Israel, but only at the expense of the indefinite deferral of Palestinian aspirations.

For a good part of the 1980s, Saddam Hussein was seen as "our" strongman and functioned as such in fighting the Ayatollah. Presumably, had Saddam done as expected and taken only a nibble out of Kuwait, the United States would now merely be bolstering Saudi Arabia as its latest surrogate. But

* In *Ropes of Sand*, ex-C.I.A. man Wilbur Crane Eveland tells how an offhand remark by Eisenhower that he hoped "the Nasser problem could be eliminated" had led to the dispatch of assassination teams. "Later," writes Eveland, "finding that Eisenhower had merely meant 'improved U.S.-Egyptian relations,' Foster Dulles ordered his brother to bring the CIA's operation to a halt."

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the seizure of Kuwait was a bold and undeniable affront to America's domain. It shouldn't seem strange to hear once again the claim of protecting small nations from aggression as a justification for American intervention, or to find a "Nazi" threat invoked in the absence of the Russian bear. The sad fact is that instead of ending America's dependence on oil and encouraging democratic movements for self-determination across the Middle East, Washington has simply relied on one unstable formula after another to maintain its dominance. Now it's all blowing up in our face. □

A MUCKRAKER AT 100

Seldes Hangs Up His Typewriter

MORTON MINTZ

George Seldes and the late I.F. Stone are two of my few heroes, and they greatly admired each other. Izzy acclaimed Seldes as "the dean and the 'granddaddy' of us investigative reporters"; he also proudly acknowledged that the model for "I.F. Stone's Weekly" had been "In fact," which Seldes put out for ten years, starting in 1940, and which was the country's first regular publication devoted to press criticism. Every week, "In fact" exposed press corruption, cowardice, dishonesty. And whoring by, to cite a couple of memorable examples, redbaiting commentators George Sokolsky (for the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Iron and Steel Institute and Imperial Japan) and Fulton Lewis Jr. (for the N.A.M. and Adolf Hitler). Just as "In fact" was honored by having such enemies, so was it honored by having such friends as Eleanor Roosevelt, Harry Truman and Theodore Dreiser (to put the annual "Free Press Week" in perspective, the novelist once proposed to Seldes, they should sponsor "Kept Press Week").

I had talked with Izzy many times over the years but never with Seldes, who was 97 when the last of his twenty books, his wonderful autobiography, *Witness to a Century: Encounters With the Noted, the Notorious, and the Three S.O.B.s*, was published in 1988. Before and since he has been interviewed many times. So when I phoned him to request an interview, I had in mind the pleasure of spending time with him, not an expectation of earthshaking disclosures. He readily agreed to see me, so on a lovely autumn afternoon my wife and I pulled into the driveway of his simple brick colonial in Hartland-4-Corners, Vermont.

It was November 19, 1990, three days after his 100th birthday. If, that is, you put more trust in his grandmother's assertion that he was born on November 16, 1890, than in official records asserting a birthdate nearly ten weeks earlier, September 10.

"I would think your grandmother was more trustworthy," I ventured. "That's what I say!" he replied. "So I say I was born November 16, and Grandmother says, 'Well, I was there!' I guess she has you when she says that." *The Vermont Standard*, perhaps more respectful of bureaucracy than I, had declared on Thursday, September 13, that "George Seldes turned 100 years old Monday."

He was gracious. He offered us a bedroom if we wanted to spend the night (we couldn't). He was also characteristically acerbic, cantankerous, iconoclastic, unmellowed. When I asked him if he watches television, he replied, "That's about all I do. I have a blab-off, so I only get news." Demonstrating his mastery of the remote, he said, "There is no news, so I turn it off. Kill 'em!"

"I've never been asked about religion," George Seldes said. "Father thought that it was totally wrong, the whole world system of inculcating religion in young people 5, 6, 7 and 8 years old, you know. . . . So his idea was to keep you away from anything religious until you were 15 or 16—in the teens—and then you could study all the religions, and you might want to choose to be a Mohammedan. He said the main thing is that we [the Seldes family] are all deists; we believe in God. We are not atheists, none of us. We may be agnostic—that's a good healthy way to be, my father would say—but we're certainly not atheists. We're religious people. That's the only religion we had in the family for generations."

"And that is the way you feel today?"

"Absolutely."

The *Vermont Standard* story begins with a distressing scoop: "Seldes is about to give away his typewriter." He had actually done the deed in early November, Seldes told me, "as a mark that I was never gonna do any more journalism. I'm through! I gave my typewriter away. . . . I wanted to tear the last strings that bound me to writing. . . . I broke with the past."

"Why did you want to tear your last ties with writing?"

"I want freedom! I want to die in peace and freedom. . . . I don't care to appear in public and make speeches and be a public man anymore. I don't do this, that and the other, and one of the things I don't care for is to write more books, have more books reviewed, get good reviews and bad reviews, and take up issues with people. I just let things go. The hell with it."

"When did you decide that you didn't want to write anymore?"

"About a year ago, when I was approaching 100."

"Was there any particular——"

"No, no, there wasn't. I figure I've written everything. Somebody wanted a final book or something. What was the title? *To Hell With the Joys of Old Age*. I returned the money and gave my typewriter away and upset my nephew very much. He wants the typewriter, by the way. You know what somebody told me the other day? It may be a hundred years old and a museum piece." Seldes said he'd owned the machine, a Royal upright, since 1930.

"To whom did you give the typewriter?"

"To a man who lives down the road here."

Fortunately, the neighbor is willing to return the typewriter, and George's nephew Timothy, a literary agent in Manhattan, will seek a suitable resting place for it.

Seldes dedicated *Witness* "to my Vermont neighbors and

Morton Mintz, an author and a retired Washington Post *reporter, is chair of the Fund for Investigative Journalism.*

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other friends who have made living alone possible."

"What's special about them?"

"Well, your car is out in the driveway, isn't it? If you'd taken it in the barn and closed the door, there would have been two or three people who would have stopped here: 'What do you want in the way of groceries? What do you want . . . in the stores? We're going shopping right now.' Or they'd stop [on the way] back and say, 'How are you? Do you need something?' I mean, people come in. They're our neighbors here."

Connie Tessler, the neighbor who came over to prepare a light supper for Seldes, told me, "George requires a lot of sleep. He is 100 years young."

"How does TV news as you see it on the commercial networks——"

He interrupted. "It's very good, I would say. It's very much better than it ever was. But the tragedy of this whole country is that people are getting five minutes of television bulletins and think they are informed as to what's going on in the world."

Timothy now and then has sent him bundles of magazines, and for five or six years a neighbor on occasion used to drive him to the Dartmouth College library in nearby Hanover, New Hampshire.

"I would spend the whole day there. I would always get half a dozen papers from different parts of the country. I would never fail to get *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*.

"Unfortunately, my neighbor says that she had to get some work as a substitute schoolteacher or something, and so it's been several months now that I haven't been out to the library to keep up with the world."

"Which magazines do you care for most?"

"Well, I'd always subscribed with my money—I don't anymore—to *The Nation* and *The New Republic*. I hear *The New Republic* has [become] just a Republican Party organ."

I said that many believe *The New Republic* has tilted to the right.

"Well, then to hell with it!"

He wrote in *Even the Gods Can't Change History*: "All muckraking, crusading, debunking, reforming, and investigative reporting aimed at exposing corruption and enlightening the public has been the work of liberals." Does he believe that is still true?

"Oh, I believe it's still true. I don't see why I need to take it back, change it any."

In an extraordinary speech in 1938, William Allen White, the famed Kansas Republican who owned, edited and published the Emporia *Gazette*, examined the relationship of the press to power.

"The owners of newspaper investments, whether they be bankers, stockholders of a corporation, or individuals, feel a rather keen sense of financial responsibility," White said in the speech, which was reported in *The Nation* but almost nowhere else. "The sense of property goes thrilling down the line. It produces a slant and a bias. . . . But I suppose in the end newspapers cannot be free, absolutely free in the highest and best sense, until the whole social and economic structure of American life is open to the free interplay of democratic processes."

Seldes and White spent long hours discussing and arguing about "the status of the American press," which, Seldes has been saying for years, has improved vastly in the ensuing half-century.

If you were today the publisher or owner of a great newspaper, I asked Seldes, "what would be your idea of what your relationship should be to the President or the White House people, the secretaries of the Cabinet, the big corporate heads and so forth? Would you think it correct or incorrect, wise or unwise, to be friends with the people in power? Or should you go out of your way to shun such friendships?"

"Well, I'd hate to shun anybody. And I would be very careful not to be too friendly to anybody—that's going to extremes. I wouldn't overstep the rights of the ownership."

I reminded Seldes of the minimal esteem for Karl Marx that H.G. Wells had expressed at a soiree at the Vermont home of Sinclair Lewis in the late 1930s.

"After a grand lunch," Seldes wrote in *Witness*, "we sur-

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rounded Wells, listening to every word he had to say on history, politics, world affairs. Kyle Crichton, an editor of *Collier's* who moonlighted as Robert Forsythe of the *New Masses*, asked the sharpest questions. This annoyed Mr. Wells.

" 'The trouble with you Americans,' he said, pausing, 'is that you are still too much under the influence of that second-rate—shall I say third-rate—mind, Karl Marx.' "

My question was, had the fall of Communism and the collapse of the Soviet empire been inevitable? Had the "third-rate mind" of Marx made the collapse inevitable? Was it inevitable that monsters like Stalin took charge? What was the cause? Seldes surprised me: The primary problem, he seemed to say, was the leaders, not the system.

"I don't know. . . . There'd be no sign of [the collapse] if Lenin and Trotsky were around. They were great men, Lenin and Trotsky."

"If they were around, you think that Communism, the Soviet Union, would be strong today?"

"Stronger, yes, instead of weaker, instead of falling apart."

"Why is that?"

"Because they were powerful people. They argued, they presented the case well, and they had a following of a great, great majority of people."

"If they or people like them had remained in power, what would life be like for people in the Soviet Union?"

"Well, I can't quite make out, because after all, you see, they took over one of the lowest mentally fit countries in the world. . . . [The people] couldn't read or write. Just low, low mentality, the whole country, which they raised year by year; they raised the mental standards of the country. And I've been thinking they . . . could still be raising it. I don't know if there is such a thing as an ideal system, but they were trying out a new system, and it seemed to be working for quite a while."

What of the tens of millions of people—literate if not educated people—whom Stalin locked up or slaughtered?

"I have never really seen an investigation of what took place in the gulag, or what took place in Siberia."

I cited overwhelming documentation of the atrocities and went on to say that I was trying to get his opinion on why the Soviet system is now failing.

"Well, it obviously has no leaders, and hasn't for quite a while."

Gorbachev doesn't impress you favorably?

"Nobody in recent times has impressed me. So if the present leadership disappears altogether, it would not impress me."

"Let me ask one of the profound questions——"

"I don't want profound questions. I can't give you a profound answer. Go on, ask it. I can't stand profundity anymore."

"Will the world survive its nuclear and biological weapons, its environmental destruction and the usual litany of greed, inhumanity and stupidity?"

"I have always thought that the world happened mysteriously, and will probably disappear mysteriously. On the other hand—I'm always arguing with myself—can all this progress of so many millions upon millions of years be for nothing? I can't imagine that the power of the human being started from gorillas advancing into the shapes of human beings, even if it took a hundred million years for this thing to happen. I can't imagine it all happening without a creation of some sort. And if there was a creation, then there might be a disappearance."

"Do you think that the advent, the arrival of nuclear weapons——"

"Oh, yeah, I think that's giving us a good chance to disappear someday. Oh, yeah."

"Are there any prophecies or predictions you'd like to make for the next century?"

"Oh, no. I don't want to make any predictions. No, no, no; I'll make no predictions."

"Is it too early for a cocktail?" Seldes asked. "I've been two weeks without a cocktail. You'd be surprised how many Vermonters won't touch liquor. Here you find that the majority say, 'Never touch it.' "

I mixed two martinis. □

Gulf War

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

spread, recurrent images in the media to be "national dreams," which, like an individual's dreams, reveal a great deal about the unconscious emotional life of a nation. Although it might be objected that there was—as in personal dreams—a reality component to the images, since children were in fact being killed by the Iraqi troops, what made the images revealing of the inner life of America was, first, the degree to which child abuse seemed to provide the symbolic focus for the crisis and, second, the fact that the images of the Terrifying Parent and the Hurt Child had been appearing in the American media for *more than a year before* the invasion.

Most of the Hurt Child images that appeared prior to the gulf crisis were either tied to news stories of an imagined crime wave against children or involved the gratuitous use in cartoons and magazine covers of images of tortured children. For example, the cover of *Money* magazine highlighted a story about college admissions by depicting a youth in agony, pierced by pennants (a takeoff of the *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian*), with a headline reading "The Sacrifice of the Children." The Terrifying Parent appeared in a flood of cartoons showing biting mouths that looked like angry fathers, or were connected with recurring images of "dangerous women" celebrities who look like overpowering mothers, such as Leona Helmsley as Greedy Bitch, Ivana Trump as Castrating Wife, Madonna as Vampire Whore and Roseanne Barr as Insulting Badmouth.

These Terrifying Parent and Hurt Child themes emerged at a time of widely shared feelings of personal depression, guilt and sinfulness. Early in 1990, the media began to report this phenomenon. "People are incredibly depressed," announced *The New York Times*. "In the past month, there has

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THE SECOND ANNUAL
NATION MAGAZINE/I.F. STONE AWARD
FOR STUDENT JOURNALISM

ENTRY DEADLINE: JUNE 29, 1991

PURPOSE: *The Nation* magazine/I.F. Stone Award recognizes excellence in student journalism. Entries should exhibit the uniquely independent journalistic tradition of I.F. Stone. A self-described "Jeffersonian Marxist," Stone combined progressive politics, investigative zeal and a compulsion to tell the truth with a commitment to human rights and the exposure of injustice. As Washington editor of *The Nation* and founder of the legendary *I.F. Stone's Weekly,* he specialized in publishing information ignored by the mainstream media (which he often found in *The Congressional Record* and other public documents overlooked by the big-circulation dailies).

ELIGIBILITY: The contest is open to all undergraduate students enrolled in a U.S. college. Articles may be submitted by the writers themselves or nominated by editors of student publications or faculty members. While entries originally published in student publications are preferred, all articles will be considered provided they were not written as part of a student's regular course work.

THE PRIZE: The article that, in the opinion of the judges, represents the most outstanding example of student journalism in the tradition of I.F. Stone will be published in a fall issue of *The Nation*. The winner will receive a cash award of $500. *The Nation* reserves the right to edit the winning article to conform to the space limitations of the magazine. Announcement of the winning article will be made in *The Nation* in the fall of 1991.

DEADLINE: All entries must be postmarked by June 29, 1991.

ENTRY RULES:

All entries must have been written or published between September 1, 1990, and June 29, 1991. Tear sheets or photocopies are acceptable.

Each writer, editor of a student publication or faculty member may submit up to three separate entries. A series of related articles will be considered as a single entry. Investigative articles are particularly encouraged. There are no restrictions as to scope, content or length.

Accompanying material in support of entries is not required, but entrants are encouraged to submit a cover letter explaining the context of the submitted story, along with a brief biographical note about the author. Elaborate presentations are neither required nor desired. Entries will not be returned.

Judges reserve the right to authenticate, accept or disallow entries at their discretion. The decision of the judges is final.

All entries must include the writer's school, home address and telephone number.

ALL ENTRIES SHOULD BE SENT TO:

NATION/STONE AWARD, C/O THE NATION, 72 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10011

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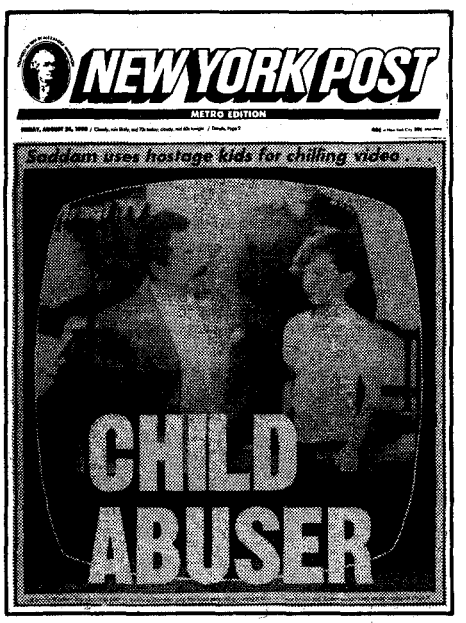
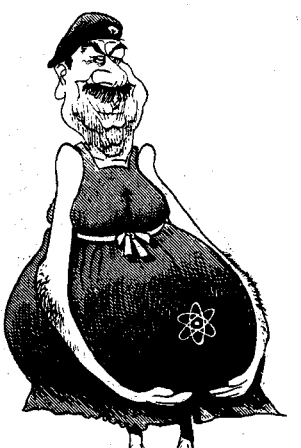
been a distinct odor of collapse and doom around [New York]," said the *New York Post*. "There is something catastrophic coming on," warned *The Washington Post*. The Consumer Confidence Index headed down, suicide hotline calls soared and apocalyptic predictions proliferated, such as the widely held belief that gigantic earthquakes were imminent in the Midwest. *The Washington Post* concluded that after eight years of optimism, "America is in . . . an ugly spasm of guilt, dread and nostalgia. Once more, America is depressed." A flurry of cartoons exhibited suicidal themes, such as people going off cliffs. One particularly revealing cartoon, published a few days before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, drew upon news stories about a doctor who had invented a "suicide machine" to help terminally ill people end their lives. The cartoon depicted George Bush as a "suicide doctor" inviting Americans to administer a lethal dose of poison to themselves—an eerie foreboding of the deaths to come in the war. As so often before, these shared "dream images" were national wishes that revealed what America was about to do.





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If a patient were to walk into a psychiatric clinic suffering from intrusive images of terrifying figures torturing children, severe depression unrelated to current life events, and suicidal wishes, a post-traumatic stress disorder (P.T.S.D.) would likely be suspected. I believe this diagnostic category most closely fits the popular mood in America during the months leading up to the gulf crisis. The standard symptoms of P.T.S.D. characterized the nation's shared emotional life at that time: (1) emotional instability with extreme fluctuations of mood, (2) frequent panic attacks and exaggerated fears for the future, (3) frantic spending and borrowing, (4) drug abuse, (5) a constriction of affect and empathy toward others, (6) hypervigilance toward imagined enemies and (7) feelings of unreality, detachment and estrangement.

Intrusive images of the Hurt Child and the Terrifying Parent are known in P.T.S.D. as "flashbacks," fragments of earlier traumas inflicted upon the patient, often beginning in childhood and repeated during the patient's developmental history. Children who have experienced physical or sexual trauma in their earliest years repeatedly re-experience strongly visualized memories of fragments of specific traumatic events. They also develop fears, panic reactions, hypervigilance and other defensive maneuvers to prevent similar overwhelming terror in their present life. What triggers these P.T.S.D. states in adults is not only situations that remind them of the original danger, as might be expected, but more often rapid changes and rising expectations in their lives, such as marriage, the birth of a child, a promotion or sudden wealth. This is because victims of childhood trauma believe they were somehow responsible for the traumatic events and therefore are undeserving of good fortune later in life.

Shared national P.T.S.D. feelings that are experienced prior to wars also regularly occur after periods of rapid change and prosperity. Evidence for this conclusion has been accumulated from statistical and psychological studies of war cycles (most modern nations experience wars about every twenty-five years). Statistics show that most major wars occur after periods of economic prosperity and social change, and those wars that occur during upswings are not only far more frequent but also bigger than the few wars that occur during downswings—six to twenty times bigger as indicated by battle fatalities, according to M.I.T. political scientist Joshua Goldstein. This conclusion is seconded by psychohistorical studies showing that shared fantasies prior to wars reveal a conviction that the nation has somehow been too sinful, materialistic, prosperous and sexually promiscuous, and that someone should be made to pay for the period of excess by some sort of sacrifice.

This "sinful nation" fantasy was omnipresent in the months prior to the gulf crisis. Consider, for example, a typical cartoon portraying a fat, sinful Uncle Sam coming out of an orgiastic party labeled "80s" and having to slim down enough to enter a narrower door labeled "90s." Articles proliferated in the media claiming that America had been on an irresponsible binge during the previous years and that someone would soon have to pay for its excesses.

Ritual human sacrifice for the purpose of purifying groups was a widespread practice of early civilizations such as in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Israel, China, Mexico and Mesoamerica. Sacrifice was described as necessary to appease the gods (symbolic parents) in connection with guilt over some success. In fact, a study of these early ceremonies reveals group fantasies connected with the sacrifice that contained identical P.T.S.D. symptoms as those preceding modern wars, including: (1) a sinful, polluted world, including a leader who is seen as becoming more and more unable to contain the nation's growing feelings of emotional

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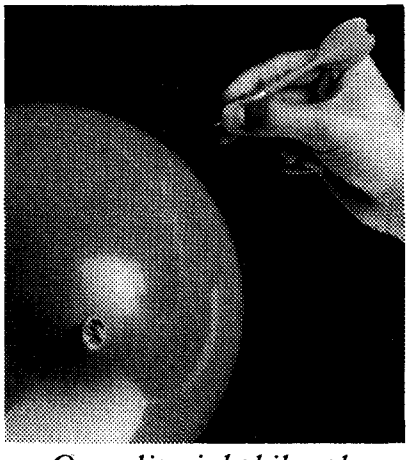

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chaos, (2) angry gods and goddesses threatening to devour or wipe out the nation unless a ritual sacrifice of a victim is made, a victim who ultimately represents (3) the divine child—the son or lover of the Great Mother—who is killed and whose sacrificial blood revitalizes the group's emotional life, and who ultimately represents the "guilty" child who was the victim of the original trauma.

Just as individuals suffering from P.T.S.D. symptoms often achieve temporary relief from their emotional distress by hurting themselves or others, large groups have also found they can achieve considerable catharsis and regain their emotional equilibrium through human sacrifices and wars. These healing rituals have similar dramatic stages that have remained remarkably consistent over the past ten millenniums, including:

§ *Creating an enemy for the ritual combat.* When the Aztecs felt polluted, they would arrange "flower wars," in which they divided their armies into two sides and fought a cosmic battle in order to capture enemy warriors who could be used for the sacrifice (cutting out of the heart) that revitalized their nation. Modern nations also regularly create the enemies they will eventually fight and arm brutal regimes that one day might be needed as opponents. In the Persian Gulf, America created a belligerent Iraq first by assisting for a decade the military buildup of Saddam's dictatorship and then by signaling him that it was time to start the cosmic battle. This was done by replying to his threats to invade Kuwait with messages stating that America would not intervene, because "we have no opinion on . . . your border disagreement with Kuwait" and "we have no defense treaty relationship with Kuwait."

§ *Ritual humiliation of the leader.* The war ritual symbolically re-enacts the terrible humiliation and degradation of the initial trauma. Therefore, the leader of the nation must first undergo a ritual humiliation before proceeding with the killing part of the sacrifice. The Babylonian Sacred King, for instance, would be slapped on the face and forced to kneel in abasement before the image of the god and confess his sinfulness. In America before the gulf crisis, President Bush was forced to undergo a considerable humiliation period of being called a "wimp"—he was often pictured in cartoons with a woman's purse on his limp wrist—before he was allowed to regain his masculinity by beginning the war. In fact, *Time* magazine even showed him on its "Man of the Year" cover just before the start of the war as *two* George Bushes, one strong and one weak, an image identical to that used by those societies that appointed "doubles" of the king in order to emphasize his strong and weak aspects. The ritual humiliation of the "wimp" part of Bush was then climaxed by the supposed humiliation of America by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Actually, it took Bush some time to recognize that the Iraqi invasion was his scheduled ritual humiliation. The morning after the invasion, he invited into his office the reporters who were waiting for the U.S. response and told them, "We're not discussing intervention. I'm not contemplating such action." He hadn't yet realized that, unlike earlier Iraqi invasions, this one was to be seen as a *casus belli*, and that it was time to shift from supporting Saddam to going to war with him.

§ *Staging the triumph of good over evil.* The theological language of all wars is necessary to transform the messy task of blowing off people's faces and limbs into a sacred combat between good and evil. "There is evil in the world," Representative Stephen Solarz told the American people as he led the war party in Congress in voting for the U.S. invasion. Bush repeatedly said America was fighting for a New World Order that he promised would produce a new era of peace in the world. This rebirth/revitalization fantasy was shared by the nation. The day after America initiated its attack, the papers were filled with quotations from "ordinary Americans" who said that they felt the nation had taken a new path. The following statements are typical: "The nation will change. I don't know exactly how, but I know attitudes will just be different now." "The country had crossed a threshold." "This [is] one of those events that mark the end of an old era and the start of a new one." Iraqi war language was filled with the imagery of holy purification: Americans had defied God and desecrated Mecca, the war would "purify our souls and land of the foreigners" and "purify our family from within," and Iraq would be victorious in the "showdown between infidel and believers, between Good and Evil."

Just as ancient societies would often fight their ritual cleansing wars under the aegis of storm gods, America called its war Desert Storm—as though it would fulfill its "destiny in the desert" through the temporary violence of a desert storm that would water an arid world and make it fertile again. Even lethal weapons used in combat were described with religious metaphors, such as "the miracle of the Patriot missile." Since the king had to be shown magically performing the cleansing ritual with his awesome power, the media were filled with headlines such as "U.S. Can Whip Iraq in 5 Days"—reminiscent of Abraham Lincoln's prediction that the American Civil War would last only twenty days, and the forecasts that World War I would last only three months.

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Every effort had to be made to create the illusion that the cosmic battle killed only representatives of evil, so reporters had the task of dissociating their readers from the carnage by calling bombing "surgical strikes" and describing thousands of mangled Iraqi civilian bodies as "collateral damage." One TV reporter told the nation after the first 8,000 sorties had pulverized Iraqi forces, "Soon we'll have to stop the air war and start killing human beings," as though America was bombing only evil buildings and equipment, not real people. That the media succeeded in dissociating the public from the horrifying reality of the war is indicated by *The New Yorker*'s observation that "for those of us rivetted to our televisions in the United States, the war in the Persian Gulf for the first day or so had an eerie, remote-control quality. At times, it seemed that we were watching a war about technology." The war appeared to be a scene-for-scene replay of the movie *Star Wars*, complete with clean-cut Luke Skywalkers blasting Darth Vader bunkers with high-tech laser bombs.

The war was, like all rituals, scripted by God—that is, by the Terrifying Parent of childhood—and therefore had a compulsive quality, as though it was out of the hands of those who were conducting it. "There was always an inevitability about this," a high-level Bush Administration official said, and Bush was reported on the first night of the war to be "watching the nation go to war—almost exactly following his script—as he sat in a little study off the Oval Office, clicking his TV remote control between ABC and CNN. . . . [He] calmly remarked: 'Just the way it was scheduled.' "

What was really inevitable, of course, was the sacrifice of human life. The reason the war's military and political goals were left so undefined was that its real goal was psychological—to sacrifice victims to propitiate the Terrifying Parent, not to protect oil or save American jobs or put an emir back on his throne. The war's basic formula was "do unto others as was done unto you," and it could end only when enough people had been killed to satisfy the Terrifying Parent in our heads. Whether peace proposals can really end the war, and what face-saving concessions America can make to achieve peace, depend upon whether we feel we have "won" the war and satisfied our need for victims.

§ *The celebration of the rebirth of life.* Because the ritual sacrifice relieves the sinful, depressed feelings of the nation by inflicting on sacrificial victims the traumatic violence suffered in childhood, there is always tremendous emotional relief at the outbreak of war. Thus, right after Iraq invaded Kuwait, grateful comments appeared in the media. *The New Republic*, for example, said, "Saddam Hussein did the world a favor by invading Kuwait," and Ben Wattenberg headlined his column, "Thanks, Saddam, We Needed That." Professor Ray Brown, a media expert, concluded, "We've felt bad for months. . . . Suddenly we feel like we have a purpose."

Once a living enemy had been designated, the Terrifying Parent flashbacks in our head stopped. The national mood changed dramatically. After the allied bombing began, the President's approval rating and the stock market soared, while stories about how depressed America felt and how a severe worldwide recession was inevitable disappeared. All evil now inhered in the enemy, while a new, unified, revitalized

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America could "get on with the job" of living without the emotional disorder that had paralyzed it during the year.

That traumatic childhood might be the source of these periodic shared P.T.S.D. states might seem unlikely to those who believe that childhood, by and large, has been reasonably happy for most Americans. Yet anyone following the considerable research into the history of childhood published by The Institute for Psychohistory in the past two decades could conclude that the average American childhood was quite traumatic—including widespread physical cruelty and sexual molestation—until the 1940s, when gentler forms of child rearing became more common with "the Spock generation." In fact, the split between those Americans who felt that force must be used "suddenly, massively and decisively" to teach Saddam a lesson (Jim Baker) and those who felt that Iraq could be disciplined by the withholding of supplies through the embargo actually represents a split between those who were punished as children with traumatic physical force and those who were disciplined by the withholding of parental approval. Even the language of the leaders reflected their childhood. Although detailed psychobiographies are lacking, one can see in many of Bush's references, such as his threat to "kick the ass" of Saddam, his punitive father's practice of punishment. ("He took us over his knee and whopped us with his belt. He had a strong arm, and boy, did we feel it.") Similarly, Saddam's own traumatic childhood—including his painful, bloody circumcision as a young boy—is undoubtedly reflected in his statements that it was his mission to "return the branch, Kuwait, to the root" and that Americans would be made to "swim in their own blood."

As parental discipline gradually becomes less violent, fewer people are enthusiastic about going to war. That is one reason women—who received far less physical punishment than boys a generation ago—opposed the gulf war by 73 percent to 22 percent the month before it occurred, while men were split down the middle on the desirability of the American action. And, as can be seen by the number of youthful war protesters—both in the Vietnam and the gulf war demonstrations—the younger generation tends to oppose war more than the older. The question now is whether there are enough Americans who have had untraumatic childhoods to put sufficient pressure on Bush to allow peace negotiations that can end the war. □

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EDITORIALS.

(*Continued From Page 293*)

Jon Alpert and Maryann De Leo, who have filmed war's destructiveness in Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, the Philippines and Vietnam, joined me. The fourth member of our party was Abdul al-Kasyi, an American citizen born and raised in Iraq who has many relatives there. He had visited Baghdad, Basra and Kuwait City in December and knows the first two cities well.

We entered Iraq from Amman, Jordan. After driving a few miles in darkness we saw a fire down the road. It turned out to be a badly twisted, burning tractor-trailer that had been headed toward Iraq. Its cargo, scattered over the highway, was grain, feed for animals. In the more than 2,000 miles we traveled from February 2 through 8, we saw probably several hundred damaged or destroyed vehicles along the road. All were civilian vehicles: oil tankers, tractor-trailers, flatbeds, pickups, buses, minibuses, taxicabs and many private cars. In those we examined, we found no evidence of any military use. This includes the damaged and destroyed oil trucks, as well as scores of others in operation, which Secretary of State James Baker says were carrying arms.

We examined civilian damage in Baghdad, Basra and Diwaniya, and through press corps representatives and our camera team, the towns of Najaf, Hilla and Nasiriyah. We observed damage in other, smaller places along the way. No city, town or roadside stop we visited had running water, electricity, telephone service or adequate gasoline for transportation. The effect on the cities has been disastrous. Minister of Health Mohammed Said called the pollution of public water systems the greatest health problem in the country; tens of thousands are known to be sick, hundreds of thousands assumed to be, and several thousand are dead.

In the small city of Diwaniya the central square had been bombed. Three small hotels were destroyed, along with many shops, cafes, offices and some apartments. The post office/radio telephone office was damaged. This building may have been the target, but we saw five or six undamaged radio telephone relay towers on the way in and out of town. On the outskirts of Diwaniya we inspected four nearly contiguous residential areas in which scores of houses were damaged or destroyed. We were told by survivors that twenty-three people had been killed, six in one family, and seventy-five injured. Neighbors described losses that suggested casualties were higher.

Basra was the most heavily damaged place we visited. In five residential areas that we examined, hundreds of houses had been destroyed, several hundred people had been killed and many hundreds injured. One upper-middle-class residential area, bombed on February 4, had 128 houses and apartments damaged or destroyed on both sides of three streets that ran behind a row of apartments. We were told that fourteen people were killed and forty-six injured, but survivors protecting what remained of their homes gave accounts that indicated a greater number of casualties. We saw at least

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fifteen cars crushed or damaged in garages, indicating that people had not fled.

Bombs that hit a densely populated low-cost public-housing development destroyed or severely damaged eighteen units, killing forty-six and injuring more than seventy, according to survivors. There was a direct hit on a corner of a high school, and the elementary school across the street was severely damaged. On the outskirts of Basra the Al Makat mosque lay in rubble; its minaret stood nearby. Ten bodies of the twelve family members believed to have been there when the bomb hit had been found.

The central market, with more than 1,000 shops and vendors, had been hit. A huge crater marked the place where a supermarket had stood. Shops and sheds were damaged and eight persons had been killed and forty injured. The bomb had hit at 4 P.M. When we were there several days later, at about 11 A.M., hundreds of people were in the area. At about 8:30 one night, what was called a family club and a nightclub were hit a short distance from our hotel, the Sheraton al-Basrah, shattering glass in the dining room where we were eating dinner. The head of civil defense escorted us to the scene within an hour. Apparently no one was killed. If the clubs had been open, scores would have died. About 150 yards away on the Shatt-al-Arab waterway, the teaching hospital, closed for a week from prior damage, was apparently only shaken; its windows had been blown out in a previous raid.

Damage elsewhere in the cities and towns we visited was similar. There was no "collateral" military damage; all the destruction was to civilians. Bridges, telephone exchanges, electric generator plants, water-processing and pumping stations, even government office buildings are essentially civilian and entirely noncombatant. We saw no evidence of military presence in any of the bombed areas we visited.

The hospitals are haunting. Seven nationwide are closed, others damaged. At night there is no heat, and light comes only from candles, lanterns, flashlights and, in emergency rooms, from electric lights powered by gasoline generators. Medicine is inadequate, including sedatives and painkillers. We could hear moaning in the wards, and in the dim light we could see badly wounded children, women and men huddling in the cold. Surgeons have no water, alcohol or antiseptic with which to wash their hands before moving from one wounded person to the next.

Dr. Ibrahim al-Nouri, president of the Iraqi Red Crescent for the past ten years and a pediatrician who interned at a children's hospital in London, estimated that as of February 6 there were 6,000 to 7,000 civilian deaths from bombing and that another 6,000 had died as a result of such causes as contaminated water, lack of medicine or insufficient supplies of infant formula. His office delivers all Red Cross medicines from outside Iraq to civilian hospitals and is in at least weekly contact with every hospital by automobile.

The air assault deliberately targeting the civilian population of Iraq is a war crime. RAMSEY CLARK

Ramsey Clark is a former Attorney General of the United States.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

The Bargain

BRUCE SHAPIRO

PROTECTORS OF PRIVILEGE: Red Squads and Police Repression in Urban America. *By Frank Donner. University of California. 503 pp. $34.95.*

When I was a child, a small paperback sat on my parents' bedroom bookshelf—one of those Ballantine originals, priced at 60 cents. Its blue-and-white binding carried a titillating tabloid title, *The Un-Americans*. The volume's cover was virtually a broadside, looking something like this:

> "The House Un-American Activities Committee is the most Un-American thing in America." Harry S. Truman
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> the first fully documented account of the notorious House Committee on Un-American Activities—how their abuse of power is being met by a growing opposition.

The committee, warned the back-cover blurb, "will not be defeated easily. BUT IT CAN BE ABOLISHED—and this book is a powerful weapon." Within a few pages of Frank Donner's definitive tract, readers learned that the committee's annual budget in 1960 was ten times that of the House Committee on Agriculture; that HUAC's first investigator, Edward Sullivan, was "a publicity specialist for native Fascist groups and a former professional labor spy"; that longtime committee chair Martin Dies "shared speaking platforms with Fascist James True, inventor of a special blackjack called the 'kike-killer.' "

The committee was well on its way to the political grave when I pulled that book down from my parents' shelf. Even so, I was compelled by Donner's ironic prose, by his vivid description of political events and most of all by his relentless documentation of HUAC and its abuses. From that 60-cent paperback, a teenager wandering in the uncertain suburban haze of the early 1970s learned how a partnership of passion and precision can hold illegitimate power to account.

Bruce Shapiro writes frequently about political repression.

Protectors of Privilege is the central panel in a triptych of domestic totalitarianism, painstakingly crafted by Donner over the past thirty years. *The Un-Americans* chronicled the nation's most loathsome inquisition and offered a sort of inverse hagiography of the inquisitors themselves. In 1980 came *The Age of Surveillance*, Donner's meticulously detailed account of the government's massive campaign of political snooping and harassment from the early red scares through the Nixon years.

Donner's purpose in *Protectors of Privilege* is deceptively simple: to describe the ways municipal police forces have monitored and muzzled dissent for over 100 years. It's a subject of far broader significance than is suggested by the clucking criticism of red squads that generally surfaces from reform quarters. America's red squads are not just the regrettable but fundamentally inconsequential abuses of overweening cops. Red squads kill. That's been true from the hanging of the Haymarket martyrs in 1887 through the murder of Black Panther Fred Hampton by Chicago police in 1969 through the deaths of five children and six adults in Philadelphia's bombing of MOVE in 1985. And what's more, these elite police units have had a profound effect on politics in America's cities.

Nearly every major city had (and many no doubt still have) a red squad with decades of spying, harassment and intimidation behind it.

Nearly every major city had (and many no doubt still have) a red squad with decades of spying, harassment and intimidation behind it. And each of those red squads had its own local quirks and wrinkles. Thus in Chicago in the 1960s, police were partial to collaborating with private-sector snoops from corporations like I.T.T., along with the F.B.I. and C.I.A.; in my own city, New Haven, the prurient obsessions of police officers inspired a years-long wiretap campaign of almost inconceivable scope, drawing into its auditory net thousands of individuals and organizations, from radical feminists to the local movie house.

But there's far more to Donner's account than regurgitation of news stories and court testimony. In *The Age of Surveillance*, he explained why the political intelligence establishment has such staying power. Its roots lie, he said, in "a nativist anti-radicalism." Then he went on:

> Nativism is fear-centered, nourished by the twin myths . . . of an all-powerful internal subversive enemy and a permanently endangered national security, which deny vitality to the protected freedoms. . . . It has been sustained by a passionate tribal constituency, which seeks to implement its suppressive commitment at the decision- and policy-making levels of government.

Nowhere was that "tribal constituency" of repression more passionate than in industrial cities. The red squads emerged to guard the common ground shared by the industrial elite and the working-class patronage machines. Both groups were deeply threatened by independent radical political organizations that short-circuited established lines of power. So both in equal measure supported the creation of police forces that could pursue their shared enemies virtually without regulation.

Though the red squads soon took on a life of their own, that open alliance with industry—"the Bargain," Donner calls it—continued down to our own time. In the 1960s and 1970s in Detroit, for instance, Chrysler "provided the [red squad] . . . with information from its voluminous files concerning the political activities of workers. . . . In return, the police provided Chrysler with membership lists of allegedly subversive organizations and in some cases recommended the firing of activist employees." As recently as 1979, the Bargain was reiterated by the head of Philadelphia's Chamber of Commerce, who told the Federal Civil Rights Commission that "most businessmen . . . feel that police protection is so good that they are willing to put up with instances which, if they happened in their own family, would be intolerable."

The recent political history of America's cities can't be understood without taking into account the red squads.

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Consider, for instance, the story of Philadelphia, of vice-detective-turned-Mayor Frank Rizzo: "Police functions were converted by Frank L. Rizzo into a path to political power," writes Donner—a path greased by open appeals to racism, careful courting of the press, dossier collection on a massive scale and outright, often violent intimidation of political opponents.

Liberals were hardly immune to Rizzo's appeal: "The record indicates that some traditional liberals and reformers were so influenced by Rizzo's scare tactics that they too sacrificed civic values and reformist goals to Rizzo's planted fears of imminent destruction of the city." Rizzo's paranoid politics echoed long after his departure from power, ultimately leading to the police department's disastrous, deadly bombing raid on MOVE in 1985 and the Dresden-like destruction of the surrounding neighborhood.

Philadelphia isn't alone in having rad-hunting police at the center of its political life. The public acclaim attached to earlier radical hunters like Capt. Michael Schaak, the Chicago police officer who rounded up dozens of people after the Haymarket bombing, and James McParland, the famous Pinkerton who infiltrated the Molly Maguires, transformed the red squads into police departments' elite units. As the years went on those squads turned out a disproportionate number of future police chiefs and politicians. When William Parker, the longtime Los Angeles police chief, joined the force in 1927 his first assignment was undercover surveillance of radicals. One of his successors as chief, Edward Davis, made his own rad-baiting the launching pad for a 1978 gubernatorial campaign. In New Haven, four of the city's five most recent police chiefs were directly involved in the wiretap operation, which finally ended in 1971. One of them, Biagio DiLieto, went on to spend a decade as Mayor. The wiretap plan's original mastermind, an inspector named Stephen Ahern (who happened to be an earlier top cop's brother), is today a respected, successful real estate developer who hobnobs with the town's wealthiest residents. The city's present chief, Nicholas Pastore, is a wiretap veteran who eventually testified against his former comrades; he's rumored to possess mayoral ambitions himself. At least one former Mayor reportedly knew of the taps, though none besides DiLieto have admitted it.

Donner is most impressive and original when carefully charting the shifts in police attitudes toward dissent—shifts rooted in an evolving climate of paranoia. In the late nineteenth century, he suggests, even the most extreme police officials envisioned their jobs as simply the protection of industry, and more broadly the preservation of public order. If intimidating radicals was the way to do it, then that's what they did. But by the early twentieth century, the purpose had changed considerably: "Clandestine surveillance . . . in particular discrete situations evolved into 'intelligence' work focused on ongoing involvement with targets, not as an investigative means to a decision-making end, its blueprinted purpose, but as a (punitive) end in itself." The search for enemies, too, became an end in itself, utterly divorced from reality. Thus in the 1960s, police "insisted that evil plotters . . . were the source of ghetto unrest." This obsession with conspiracy, Donner notes, did not arise in a vacuum: HUAC, McCarthy and other Congressional investigators granted the police ever-broader definitions of subversion. "The transition from behavior to ideology, from suppression of violence to curbing peaceful dissent, was thus completed; the new, enormously expanded police mission was legitimated by our countersubversive political culture, which in turn was enriched by police contributions to its fear-based assumptions."

Donner opens more questions than he can properly answer. I'd like to learn more, for instance, about the connection between red squads and antivice crusades. It's a connection that appears over and over in the history of the rad-hunters. The nineteenth-century rise of the red squads occurred in an era of antivice efforts. Many recent antisubversive police campaigns, like New Haven's wiretap operation, were initially aimed at illegal gambling and other sins. Philadelphia's Mayor Rizzo earned his fame as a vice cop and Los Angeles police chief Parker believed that communism and vice were the twin scourges of American life.

The vice cop's terror of the unleashed sinful impulse appears over and over again in the words of the rad-hunters—most often reflected, as Donner says early on, in a special aversion to activist women. "A lot of crazy women were usually present" at anarchist meetings, wrote Captain Schaak in 1889, "and wherever a crazy proposition to kill someone or blow up the city with dynamite [was made], these 'squaws' proved the most bloodthirsty. . . . One female appeared at one of these meetings with her hus-

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band's boots on and there was another about six feet tall. She was a beauty! She was raw boned, had a turned up nose and looked as though she might have carried a red flag in Paris during the reign of the Commune." Schaak was a protofeminist poet compared with one of his descendants, 1960s Chicago red squadder Maurice Dailey. "Who did you fuck last night?" was one of his first queries to newly arrested women. "He has this thing about liberated women, that he hates them a lot," testified one woman arrested by Dailey, who recalled his "talking to me for about half an hour about my sexuality in all kinds of perverse ways."

Donner lays the decline of the red squads at the feet of a shifting public mood in the wake of Vietnam and Watergate. He may be right. But that decline also coincides with the flight of major industry from the cities; perhaps the red squads simply ran out of privilege to protect. And it's a telling tribute to the political strength of the nation's permanent government that red squads and the F.B.I. have proved considerably harder to rein in than HUAC and similar legislative efforts.

When Donner began his investigation, he could not have foreseen the worldwide evaporation of the Red Menace or the Persian Gulf war. But recent events raise an inevitable question: Since the century-old fear of world communism has ended but dissent has not, what shape will America's future red squads take? Donner himself points to the resurgence of private-sector snoops: It's a development that harks back to the days of Haymarket, when private Pinkertons were industry's first line of defense against labor agitation.

And what about enemies? Of course the gulf war has resurrected that favorite inspirational figure for red squads, the Fanatical Foreigner. Today's nativists can also point to such "outsiders" as lesbian and gay activists in groups like ACT UP. And then there's the war on drugs: With gunplay-prone crack dealers feeding fears of both violence and social decay, police forces in a number of cities have revived intelligence squads buried in the 1970s. In New Haven, a police intelligence squad formed last year to combat drug gangs showed up with a video camera at a recent antiwar rally.

Gray Panther Maggie Kuhn likes to remark that the greatest pleasure of her old age is outliving her opposition. Donner, too, has outlived most of his targets, though their progeny still lurk in the shadows. If there's any comfort to be gleaned from the chilling pages of *Protectors of Privilege*, it's from the spectacle of Frank Donner himself, armed with little more than a pile of news clippings and a typewriter, relentlessly shadowing the rad-baiters and snoops from White House to precinct house. □

Boom Times–I

EARL SHORRIS

LARVA: Midsummer Night's Babel. *By Julián Ríos. Translated by Richard Alan Francis, with Suzanne Jill Levine and Julián Ríos. Dalkey Archive. 585 pp. $27.50.*

One of the signs by which they concluded that he was dying was the ease with which he changed from mad to sane.
—Cervantes, Don Quixote

El Boom, the late-twentieth-century flowering of Spanish literature, is growing old, dying in two directions. One is a pathetic end in repetitions, imitations, the little pleadings of once-masterful illusionists now asking the audience to close its eyes to the weariness of the performer, his tattered costume, his trembling hand. The other end is not a death so much as a deafening implosion, a comic close, the grand act of criticism that concludes one school and invites the next; thus Julián Ríos has named his novel *Larva*—in English, an immature form that must change; in Spanish, a mask.

If one were to call the roll of El Boom, it might begin with Juan Rulfo, the inventor of magic realism, and end with Ríos, the investigator of storytelling. Or it might more properly begin with Cervantes, who divided the world into art and squalor, and end with Ríos, who divides the world into words and pictures. But no matter where the roll-call is ended or begun, what voices would answer along the way! After Rulfo, García Márquez and Borges, and after them, all the rest: Carlos Fuentes, Alejo Carpentier, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Severo Sarduy, Juan Goytisolo, Octavio Paz, and although it is a stretch to include them, the great and the small, Miguel Angel Asturias and Mário Vargas Llosa, and finally, the latecomers, Ariel Dorfman and Isabel Allende.

The show is closing now, and long goodbyes are never graceful. In his most recent book, García Márquez lacked the energy to speak of Simón Bolívar; there was an echo, as of repetition, in the prose. Cabrera Infante, the explosive genius of the underside of Cuba, has moved to London, where he writes about cigars. Carlos Fuentes found his true voice again in *The Old Gringo*, then produced *Christopher Unborn*, a tepid satire on the social, political and ecological ills of "Makesicko City," a book of regurgitations. The device he employed, of an unborn character narrating a novel, was also used recently in a magic political novel by Dorfman. The borrowing of characters from other novels is classic García Márquez, who imported a colonel from Fuentes, a rain of butterflies from Carpentier and so on. Fuentes borrows well: the Rentería family, which first appeared in Rulfo's great novel *Pedro Páramo*, and a character who "accepted Pedro Páramo's inheritance." But the first borrower is an artist, the second merely a critic.

Near the end, when the best singers have used themselves up, the lesser ones are heard. Vargas Llosa, a man so devoid of moral character that he sabotaged his own son in *The New York Times Magazine*, has used El Boom to grab a place in the politics of literature and of his native Peru. It does not matter what he says; he collects the fees for the work that went before.

The other ending, like the Joycean close to modernism in *Finnegans Wake*, is a passage from story to language, from art to criticism. *Larva: Midsummer Night's Babel*, the first of Julián Ríos's projected series of five books, has attracted a great deal of attention in Spain, Europe, Asia and Latin America, but almost none in the weeks since its publication here. *Encyclopedia Britannica*'s *Book of the Year 1985* described *Larva* as "an instant postmodern classic." Fuentes, Paz, Goytisolo and Sarduy, newspapers from Paris to Tokyo and magazines around the world have joined in the effusive, if slightly bemused, appreciation of the work. Surely, something has happened, but what? Blurbs are made of bombast; Ríos had created a novel, the value and intent of

Earl Shorris is the author of Under the Fifth Sun: A Novel of Pancho Villa *(Delacorte). He is writing a book about Latinos in the United States.*

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which was so likely to be misunderstood that its American publication was accompanied by a packet of explanations. In other words, Ríos has taken a great step on the path to being unread.

And that's a pity, for much of *Larva* is bawdy, funny and insightful about the relation of words to pictures and to the telling of stories. Ríos uses puns to examine the relation of words to one another, to sounds and to the descriptions of the objects and acts of which stories are made. Now and then, amid laughter and complication, the reader may suspect that Wittgenstein has been reincarnated with a baggy-pants comic's sense of humor.

To translate a book of Spanish puns and punning glosses on puns that often involve sounds and meanings imported from other languages into English, and to keep it fast and funny, is of course impossible. Faced with such a problem, Richard Alan Francis and Suzanne Jill Levine have perforce gone beyond translation and *transformed* the novel into English, a linguistic feat that seems to me very nearly equal that of the original creation.

Fortunately, they had a very clear structure to work from. The story Ríos tells is about the lovers Milalias (the Spanish word for "thousand" plus "alias") and Babelle, who are writing a novel in which they appear as the authors. Since they are conscious as opposed to natural writers, they are interested in other, similar stories: the *Thousand and One Nights*, Don Juan, Don Quixote and so on.

Ríos wishes to be a critic in the way Cervantes was when he invented a character who tried to live according to the tales of chivalry. Yet he cannot. He is a critic but not an imitator; Cervantes has already drawn the line between imagination and reality, so Ríos is compelled to go further. He constructs a novel in four parts, as in the four parts of a cloverleaf: 1) the action of the novel itself, in which a great *pícaro*, intent upon being another Don Juan, has many adventures in London; 2) a series of Pillow Notes (inspired by the erotic tales of Sei Shonagon, an eleventh-century Japanese Scheherazade) written by Babelle and Milalias, which form a fairly straightforward narration of their adventures as writers; 3) a map and Babelle's photographs of the London locales of the book, a device reminiscent of Wittgenstein's thoughts on word games in the *Philosophical Investigations*; and 4) an ironic index.

Much of the wordplay comes in the annotated notes to the main text, which are printed on the left-hand pages facing each page of text. These notes, which are more often ironic than explanatory, sometimes refer the reader to sections of the Pillow Notes. At first the book seems impenetrable, but slowly one realizes that Ríos has answered the question that one of his characters asks: "You'll weave it all together from A to Z, in the depths of your grand experimentalmudic novel?" The puns and the two sets of notes do weave together, as in an extended string of puns on pens.

The novel is complex, form used as a comment on form, but never deliberately arcane; any well-read person with a dogged sense of play and a willingness to engage the language will find that Ríos has gone to great pains to make his work available. A few examples will show his method: The main text reads, "Don Juan playing deaf, and as if suddenly remembering:—My condemned quill wouldn't write . . . Mon blanc-seing! (4) The shadow: Hmmm. Some signature . . . Blank! In invisible ink?" On the left-hand page, footnote 4: "Mont Blanc, alpinist?:

"(Alpen sport!) The big quill pen, a family relic that spurted innumerable inkspots and tempestuous nightmares . . ."

In another, more complex example, the reader encounters a group of masked revelers, the "apogee of the last, never-ending Arabian night." One of them is dressed as Sinbad. The main text continues to describe the group for two pages, until there is a footnote after the sentence "Flustered and flailing like this Sinbad." The note on the opposite page, in an allusion to *Finnegans Wake*, reads: "Hinbad the Hailer? Hail! Sinbad: See PILLOW NOTES 28."

The Pillow Note says: "One of the longest yarns spun by my Milalias was that of the second Sinbad, remember? . . . Milalias never stopped adding new episodes and chicaneries, improvising as we pushed the wheelchair of the Queen of Queensbury Palace through Kensington Gardens. . . .

"Imagine the story beginning where the famous tales of the *Thousand and One Nights* left off. The relay race would begin. After years the faithful listener Hinbad grew tired of hearing his protector Sinbad repeat the same stories."

Two pictures of Kensington Gardens appear among Babelle's photographs gathered in the back of the book, but neither Sinbad nor Hinbad is listed in the index. The meaning of this piece of the

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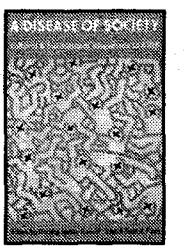

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novel has to do with literature but not with life. The material of the yarn Ríos spins is not narrative suspense but the endless mirroring of words and the world: A thousand and one nights are devoted to the investigation of the tale of the love affair between words and their denotes and connotes.

While the interplay we are treated to over the course of 585 pages is often funny, it does not always succeed. One of the great disappointments of the book comes in the meeting of the two great protagonists of modernism: "London's astute resourceful ventriloquist actor, the zaniest and most soliloquacious ventriloquist ever, with his devious one-eyed sailor: Dr. Freud and Mr. Joyce!" Very little happens; there are more puns, Freudian slips, phrases in Bloom.

And that is, finally, the insurmountable problem of the book. The conclusion to every action is a phonic joke. The reader must too frequently ask, Is a pun a trope? Or is it merely a remark on one word by another? Gertrude Stein, who feared neither invention nor convention, pointed out to Hemingway that "remarks are not literature." No better advice has ever been offered to writers.

Julián Ríos, whose sense of structure and of the intricacy of the relationship between language and that which is described by language is masterful, has not heeded Stein. He has not integrated his ideas into life, as the subjects of his investigations always did. The glory of El Boom was that its creators told stories about life while they dabbled in tales about literature. García Márquez toyed with borrowings; Borges wrote fictions about ideas; Cabrera Infante talked in torrents; even Cervantes wrote about a man whose name could be read as Horse's Ass from the Land of the Stain. But they were all careful to make the alternative world of words a livable magic. Ríos, on the other hand, produced an early work of criticism entitled *The Sexual Life of Words*. The writings and photographs of two lovers about their writings about the journey of a modern Don Juan through a fantastic representation of London on St. John's Day is a work of criticism, a dazzling literary version of the work of the conceptual artist, an ending. Art is always a beginning. □

Boom Times–II

PATRICIA HART

THE STORIES OF EVA LUNA. *By Isabel Allende. Translated by Margaret Sayers Peden. Atheneum. 332 pp. $18.95.*

Critics of Isabel Allende's first book, *The House of the Spirits*, seized on her blending of magic, hyperbole and realism to insist that it was a shallow ripoff of Colombian Gabriel García Márquez, without perceiving her vast fundamental differences from the Nobel laureate or that most of the superficial similarities to *One Hundred Years of Solitude* were ironic, even parodic. Such an evaluation reveals ignorance of the broad tradition of magic realism in Latin American fiction by assuming that García Márquez invented and patented the family saga or the mingling of the real, the hyperbolic and the impossible. It also ignores the monolithic machismo that the tradition supposes. For example, any student of Latin American literature knows that Alejo Carpentier's 1953 work *The Lost Steps* was a landmark mixture of the marvelous and the real, and reveres it as a hauntingly written masterpiece about a continent's search for cultural identity. But most readers in the 1990s also realize that its plot (in which the protagonist finds and loses a paradise defined by the fact that the women are unliberated short-order cooks, riverbank laundresses and sex slaves) is also a macho crock. We loved Mario Vargas Llosa's *The Green House* and laughed out loud at *Pantaleón and the Visitors*, but we knew at the same time that their frivolity had little to do with the real-life miseries of prostitution. We venerate García Márquez's *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, but before *Love in the Time of Cholera* we sometimes found his women incomprehensible monuments of masochism, inscrutably alien. What better ameliorative to all of this than to make room on the shelf alongside the masters of the Latin American "Boom" for the works of Isabel Allende—a writer in the business of bending tradition to fit herself.

In *The Stories of Eva Luna*, Allende's fourth work translated into English,

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lush, hyperbolic reality, a female sensibility and some none-too-subtle parodying of male stars of the Boom are again key elements. In it are twenty-three tales that the picaresque and eponymous heroine of Allende's previous work, *Eva Luna*, supposedly recounted to friends, lovers and companions—stories that were alluded to but not included in the novel. Eva's narrative voice is the unifying thread, and what she can have experienced or been told the limiting factor. Despite these restrictions, the range of stories is quite broad and demonstrates Allende's ability to move easily from one stratum of the social register to another. Like a rogue in the best tradition of the Spanish *pícaro*, Eva has run the gamut of her society from top to bottom, and in these tales its three most powerful groups—the church, the army and the landed gentry—are represented, as are the poor and the alienated: sheepherders on the pampas, dispossessed Indians, Jewish immigrants, circus performers, prostitutes and housewives. Allende's flexible, fluid prose is rendered beautifully in English once again by Margaret Sayers Peden. For example, herds of sheep in the south are "clouds trapped against the ground"; a mudslide buries a town in "telluric vomit"; and a murderer's house stuffed with rotting fruit becomes "an enormous beast in process of putrefaction, tormented by the infinite diligence of the larvae and mosquitoes of decomposition."

But perhaps the stories are too short to allow Allende to do what she is best at—to fall in love with her characters, and show them to us in all their complexity. A major strength of her novels lies in their telling of one story from many different, often contradictory, points of view, and in their illumination of the common humanity of the disparate figures to whom she gives life. Thus, she finds a middle ground of understanding between people whose ideologies set them poles apart. Her characterization of Esteban Trueba in *The House of the Spirits*, far from being an apology for General Pinochet, as some have so wrongheadedly insisted, is rather a reminder that the way to military dictatorships is paved with ordinary-looking people. Allende's character reminds us that torturers often love their children and look not so much like horned monsters as like the man next door. With the exception of "A Discreet Miracle," in which classes and ideologies exist in delightfully presented tension, these Eva Luna tales are not developed enough to allow individually for Allende's traditional ambiguity. Nevertheless, separate stories alternate points of view and social position to achieve much the same effect collectively.

Parodic versions of Boom authors abound. In "Wicked Girl," for example, the prepubescent Elena Mejías attempts to seduce her stepfather, who repels her in disgust but later becomes obsessed with the incident and fantasizes about the child, even after she is sent away to boarding school. When he at last confronts the grown-up Elena, she has forgotten the incident. Where a cruelly perverted child destroyed the adults in Vargas Llosa's *In Praise of the Stepmother*, here the terms are inverted (and much more realistic). The child may have fleeting sexual longings, but it is only in the adult that these can have hardened into perversion. The "magic" here is that Allende spares the child from lasting harm.

Later, in "Toad's Mouth," told in a style that cleverly mocks Vargas Llosa's *Pantaleón*, the energetic Hermelinda sells herself to sheepherders on the cold southern plains, inventing erotic games to alleviate boredom. In the one alluded to in the title, a man who succeeds in tossing a coin that lodges in Hermelinda's vagina from a distance of four paces earns two hours alone with her. With this crude playing off of the Cinderella myth, Allende is not out to prove that she can be as raunchy and insensitive as her male counterparts, but to expose fairy-tale brainwashing. The "perfect fit" that in Cinderella is coyly expressed as shoe size here is rendered literally. Moreover, in the fairy tale, the prince offers a palace, riches and station; Cinderella her virtue and beauty. Here the equation is noted in vigorous shorthand—the woman offers sex and the man money.

In "Walimai," the reality of prostitution is even more clearly dealt with. Unlike García Márquez's Eréndira, who services infinite hordes of men and emerges unscathed and triumphant, this young Indian woman, tied by her ankle to satisfy endless rubber workers in the jungle, finds only degradation and death.

Ironic references, in fact, are the only real similarity to the Boom authors that I see in these stories. Juan Manuel Marcos has written that calling Allende an ape of García Márquez is like calling Cervantes a plagiarist of the chivalric tradition, and that Don Quixote is not a pale imitation of Amadís but his gravedigger. Otherwise, a host of different and more appropriate comparisons suggest them-

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selves. Like the James Joyce of *Dubliners*, Allende builds each of these stories to a moment of epiphany; like the Edith Wharton of *Roman Fever*, she poises her characters on the brink of a moment of social change, so that they often seem to be struggling with one foot in the nineteenth century and one in the twentieth. Like Jorge Amado, Allende can spin a funny, sensual yarn, but like Clarice Lispector or Luisa Valenzuela, she can use her narrative skills to remind us that parallel to our placid and comfortable existence is another, invisible universe, one where poverty, misery and torture are all too real. □

One-River Schoolhouse

MELISSA PRITCHARD

RIVER OF TRAPS: A Village Life. *By William deBuys and Alex Harris. University of New Mexico. 238 pp. $19.95.*

Perhaps because of its relative youth, American society judges age a negative condition, one to be dreaded and denied. And no few of our ancestors deemed tradition burdensome to the progressive demands of a raw, new country. Yet, a region long isolated by a foreboding geography and its not-infrequent counterpart, poverty, may preserve a wealth of tradition, which for the larger society encroaching upon it becomes a source of profit. In northern New Mexico, the Anglo hunger to absorb and mimic aspects of Indian and Spanish-American culture is a prevalent part of the contemporary emotional landscape. It seems we subdue cultures only to sentimentalize them: The peoples we corral into economic surrender are exploited as lucrative tourist attractions—a galling irony seldom remarked on by those briefly passing through this region of "rich, tri-cultural tradition." Starved of our own symbols and rituals, we feast off those rendered palatable to our aesthetic, a process mocked and justifiably resented by the cultures being consumed.

The Old Ones of New Mexico, written by Robert Coles and photographed by Alex Harris (University of New Mexico), and the newly published *River of Traps: A Village Life*, written by William deBuys and also photographed by Harris, are essential antidotes to the poisonous view of culture as condiment. Both books reflect life within the Spanish-American community with truth, insight, clarity and respect.

Melissa Pritchard lives in Taos, New Mexico, and is author of the Flannery O'Connor Award–winning story collection Spirit Seizures *(Macmillan) and a forthcoming novel,* Phoenix *(Cane Hill Press).*

To wander, vulnerable to fate, belongs to the instinct and territory of youth. To journey in search of truths rather than sit safely beside an accumulation of knowledge is the hero's epic choice. So like the sadhu renouncing worldly attachment or the pilgrim relying on faith for his dinner, Alex Harris and William deBuys traveled with no secure itinerary, a path circuitous and inexorable as the Río de las Trampas, River of Traps, toward a village in northern New Mexico, and to Jacobo Romero, an old Hispano of El Valle, who became, over a decade's span, teacher and *vecino*, neighbor and friend.

Issuing from the privileged belly of American life with its sophisticated technology, habit of materialism, lure of the dispensable and the disposable, and moving intuitively into a peripheral, endangered culture, Harris and deBuys do not, initially, perceive their teacher. Preoccupied, gifted young men, they are distracted by formal projects and worthy, foundation-funded goals. Only gradually do they recognize in their neighbor the absolute embodiment of an ideal they had long sought to clarify.

River of Traps forms an irresistibly engaging story as these two young men, fresh from academia, commit themselves to the deceptively simple rigors of a life close to the land. DeBuys, a storyteller of poetic breadth with a discerning eye for subtle, sensitive associations; Harris, a photographer of rare empathy and brilliant composition; and Romero, a farmer of humility and dignity, simple of habit, complex in philosophy and rich in earthy humor, form the elemental chemistry for this significant book. If, by studying one's opposite, we approach understanding ourselves, these three men regarded one another with huge curiosity, acute perception and a high measure of humor. Friends from a capitalist, time-conscious society view themselves in the reflection of a farmer born of Spanish descent at the turn of the century, of no formal education, who has variously been a rancher, farmer, sheepherder, bootlegger, miner, miller, cook, Democratic chairman in a precinct of fifty-six registered voters. El Valle is a community where hand labor is an art, utility is respected and age is so honored as to be given its own name, *anciano*; where nothing is dispensable, not family, tools or animals; where everything contributes and is prized for function. This is a land and people of "hard-used, simple elegance," where there is little margin for sentimentality in the struggle to survive. Nostalgia for the days before indoor plumbing and electricity is nonexistent among those who experienced them. Life's preciousness is weighed, always, against the nearness of death. One's good fortune is counted not so much by money as by the secure possession and cultivation of land, animals and food. Love of the earth is deep, the water priceless. The acequia, or irrigation ditch, running through the village is an ancient system devised by the inhabitants' direct ancestors, subjects first of the Spanish crown in the 1750s, then the Mexican Republic, and finally, by 1848, the United States.

Much of the charm of *River of Traps* lies in the gentle, self-deprecatory wit of deBuys. Incidents abound where he and Harris quietly compete to be Jacobo's most apt pupil. Or together they try outsmarting him, only to be abashed by a variety of failures. (In an attempt to rid their field of gophers, deBuys and Harris, rather than accede to Jacobo's time-honored method of flushing them out and whacking them with a shovel, drop cyanide gas cartridges down the gopher holes. Half the cartridges fail to detonate; the others sputter only briefly. "Maybe you better go back to the shovel," Jacobo tells them.)

In El Valle, human life is inextricable from nature. A man is enmeshed in the life of the mountains, the fields, the river, the animals. He is not falsely dominant, knows himself as temporal, a momentary caretaker. There is little room for an artificial aesthetic; art dwells in function and utility, in the worn shovel's releasing water from the ditch to flood the wheat field, the alfalfa, the orchard. Work has its social context; no chore is without its neighborly visit, and friendships are deepened by reliance on one another.

On the other hand, women appear in *River of Traps* only peripherally, an imbalance attributable, perhaps, to the authors' intent to keep the primary focus on the dynamics of a male trinity. To declare that I would have been happier had some

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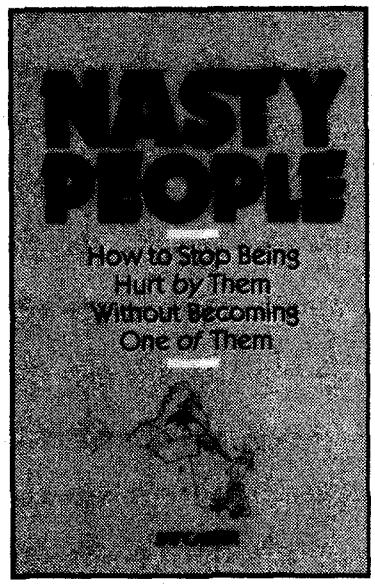

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portion of the book been devoted to a lengthier reflection on Jacobo's wife, Eloisa, derives not as much from a feminist stance of redress as from curiosity and an instinct for completion. To have heard the voices of the several women close to these men would have enhanced the book's vision. For artists so admirably committed to the pure rendering of a regional portrait, the near absence of these women is puzzling.

Detractors of the art of photodocumentary warn of its potential dangers. Sentimentalizing the subject, idealizing a society in part because of cynicism about one's own, coming out of a more privileged culture to make an opportunistic hit on another: These are criticisms that must be answered. In the case of William deBuys and Alex Harris, a legitimate friendship with Jacobo Romero preceded, by years, any notion of a "project." Adapting humbly to a mountain community, tending their piece of land, slowly building a house, they immersed themselves with unobtrusive sincerity. Compassion rather than morally fueled political theory led them, as explorers from one culture, to return with revelations of another. Artists are often the outsiders who reveal us to ourselves. The very authority and grace with which they allow Jacobo's life to speak for itself keeps the book free of any hint of exploitation. Instead, they have rendered, with precision and an exquisite sensibility, the story of one man who, in turn, reflects a regional culture, a friend whose life, without pretense or vanity on anyone's part, inspired a labor of love.

One of Jacobo's most pleasurable memories is of going *paseando* as a young sheepherder, traveling freely, without agenda. Now, in his old age, he sits astride an ancient, gaunt red horse, plodding from end to end of the village and back, a milder *paseando* riding and visiting. In a harrowing incident, deBuys comes upon Jacobo's red horse fallen in a ditch, trapped beneath the trunk of a juniper. From that moment, when Harris must shoot the injured animal, the old man's mobility is curtailed. He does not drive a car and must use two canes to walk, touchingly akin to the two sticks he loved to play with as a child, pretending to have four legs and to imitate the lithesome agility of a deer. After the death of the horse, Jacobo stays closer to home: In a bittersweet irony, the more confined he becomes, the closer an immortality he attains, as his youthful neighbors begin to realize his place in their world, more profound than they had yet acknowledged. With new intent, they record his life in photograph and text. Occasionally, Harris and deBuys depart El Valle and return; during one time away, their 86-year-old neighbor, their *vecino*, Jacobo Romero, dies. The family requests that Alex speak at the funeral, an unusual tribute that he performs with simple grace.

Throughout *River of Traps*, deBuys has composed Cantos, or songs, interior meditations on the life of Jacobo Romero. These are haunting tributes. The stature of the man as teacher to the photographer and the writer can easily be measured by the beauty and durability of the book, as contradictory, dignified and mysterious as the natural world encompassing El Valle. On the arduous taking of one particular portrait by Harris, deBuys comments on Jacobo Romero: "For an instant, he looks fierce, even defiant. For an instant his face shows a certain power, a power that comes from long-tested tenacity and endurance. For an instant his self-possession is complete; no king could look more regal, no commoner more rooted in place, and in that instant, the shutter opens and closes."

And from deBuys's final Canto, "Feeding": "This is the moment which you command, when snow clings to the branches of the cottonwoods, when you swing the fork and the mind of the spot-cheeked cow is flooded with appetite, when old age has strength and red-haired beasts find nourishment, and when you and the spot-cheeked one, in your particular and separate ways, prevail." □

MUSIC.

GENE SANTORO

Rockin' in the Free World

The 60s are back, for the second or third time in recent memory, in every manifestation from clothes to graphics to vocabulary to drugs of choice. And so reformed bands and ghost bands from the period have been reprising hits and near hits, sounds and attitudes and gestures for the graying folks who were kids then and for their kids.

It can be enjoyable and fascinating and even comforting to watch the two- and three-generational crowds at, say, Grateful Dead or Eric Clapton concerts (in fact, those two 60s icons have genuinely pursued their music, even if the results have been mixed). And unpretentious reunion concerts can be the easygoing fun they're supposed to be, despite the abuse many critics have been heaping on them. But the overall thrust of this 60s redux, whether from older players like The Who and The Band, or younger recyclers like the English wave of neo-psychedelic groups being highly touted throughout the industry right now, is eerily disembodied by nostalgia. It recalls Ronald Reagan's frequent gestures at a fictitious 50s. But where the connection between Reaganism and the 50s was ideological, the only real cultural link between the present and the 60s is commercial. (This revival was solidly in place long before Operation Desert Storm gave commentators the opportunity to make misleading comparisons between the Middle East and Vietnam.)

So even if rock's current obsession with the 60s seems to be analogous to the Reagan-era retreat of young jazzers into pre-existing languages like bop and hard bop after the creative ferment of the 60s and 70s, it's not. Since culture goes through cycles of exploration and retrenchment, what's happened recently within the two genres looks superficially alike. But rock isn't jazz, and it has no obvious place for an elder statesman like Duke Ellington. Outside of garage bands doing covers of old hits, there's no standard repertory and only a limited sense that songs can, or should, be detached from their original performances.

In a curious way, because it was marketed from its beginnings as "youth culture," rock is powered by a relentless pseudoromanticism that doesn't allow it to acknowledge its own lengthening history and the age that implies. Live fast, die young is still the template, and it's a major semiconscious source of critical rage at the so-called dinosaur bands that have been touring with more frequency and more fanfare since Woodstock's twentieth anniversary two years ago.

Whatever you think about the too-often cynical motives driving these revisitations, it's still true that the best (and the far-less-than-best) of this frequently disposable music finds lasting meaning in people's lives. If it didn't, we'd need a radically new definition of culture. But that points to rock's central conundrum: The commercial cult of the perpetually new can't face its past within the music itself, and doesn't allow for either continuity or growth—two of culture's primary

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functions—outside narrow genealogical limits. In response, some critics have elevated disposability itself into an aesthetic, buying into a kind of corporately administered planned obsolescence for pop culture. That seems like a dead end, a blinkered and contradictory stance, unless you want to claim that pop music is a totally manufactured commodity foisted on a gullible audience—which I don't.

On the other hand, it's also true that once most rockers are divorced from their historical moment, they cease to be engines for development. If Neil Young is one of the rare exceptions, it's because he understands the passage of time and its inevitable distancing, but at the same time refuses to lapse into nostalgia, because he remains determined to be as naked now in his 40s as he was as a teenager in the seminal Buffalo Springfield. Young has always been one of the scariest rockers around. It's not just his screechingly inventive torture of the electric guitar. It's not just the seized-up quaver of his thin nasal voice as it wobbles precariously around notes. It's not just his willingness to shift (with wildly uneven results) from grungy rocker to delicate folkie to technohead. It's the truly frightening intensity those qualities grow out of. Even at his worst—which he often is—Young is always emotionally naked, and he doesn't care who's looking. He's rock's shaman, a holy fool.

Ragged Glory (Reprise), which reunites him with the late-60s garage-band trio Crazy Horse, tackles head-on two central problems 60s rockers and the fans who grew up with them have been facing: aging and history. It's not coincidental that during the past few years rock has fallen more deeply into the grip of nostalgia. The cycles of repetition accelerate as sanitarily repackaged decades come on the market as "memories"; the pace is so hectic that soon we may be officially nostalgic for the 90s.

To a large extent, that's exactly what *Ragged Glory* is about. In "Over and Over," for instance, while Crazy Horse snorts and his guitar snarls, Young sings, "Remember the nights of love and that moment on the beach/That wasn't really too long ago/But we paid the price of time and now it's out of reach/And so the broken circle goes/Over and over again."

Most of the rest of *Ragged Glory*, as nasty and brutish and exuberant and creative a garage-band guitar bash as rock has ever had, is just as to-the-point. Take "Mansion on the Hill," which appears to be an unapologetic evocation of flower-power days. The first verse runs, "Well I saw an old man walking in my place/When he looked at me, it could've been my face/His words were kind but his eyes were wild/He said, I got a load to lug but I want one more try/There's a mansion on the hill/Psychedelic music fills the air/Peace and love live there still/In that mansion on the hill." That's a characteristic Youngian (pun intended) metaphorical landscape. In "Love to Burn," for example, he sings about "walking in the Valley of Hearts"; there he finds the desolate couples who perpetually argue because they've lost themselves by refusing to spend their ability to love on each other. He tells of his own Orphic encounter with a spirit who advises him, "You gotta let your guard down/You better take a chance on love."

Young has always projected his emotions as a world, however paradoxical or inexplicable—which is why at times he can be utterly awful, and why at times he can write such powerful and terrifying songs. He refuses to protect himself with pat judgments and revisionism. He neither ignores the past nor irradiates it with a nostalgic haze. As in "Mansion on the Hill," he stares into his aging face, acknowledges its history, seizes the multiple ghostly images that trail from its present, and then melts his selves down in the fury of the immediate creative moment.

Young's insights into the interactions of time and pop culture offer a model for rock that's as far from the bored stage antics of founders like Chuck Berry and Bo Diddley as you can get. They're equally far from the extravagant onslaughts, however successful, of bands like the Rolling Stones and The Who, who are effectively trapped within a perpetual time warp. As Keith Richards said to me before the last Stones tour, "We've got to find a way to make rock and roll grow up." Ironically, the Stones haven't. The Steel Wheels roadshow boasted terrific performances, but the Stones haven't generated memorable new material, a new sound, a new direction, for more

RITUAL

It didn't help to know this
was an old story. That there were worse
stories happening, even now, as we drove

past unplowed fields where mists rose,
frail ghosts of smoke signals summoning us
north. That day, in April

my sister took all of his clothes, placed them
on the dining room table, and proceeded
to divide, and serve, with care,

knowing the tastes and needs of each male
member of the family assembled for the occasion.
I sat in a chair by the window and watched

this ancient ritual of the eating of the body.
They were awkward at the meal.
Light, a tongue-cut crow, perched on a limb

in the leafless ash, wings folded.
The moon-faced grandfather clock
swung its pendulum, slowly. When it chimed

the hour of dusk, wrapped in quilts
of silence, we waved
farewell to the face in the window

April had transformed from glass into mirror.

A commotion of geese and stars
coursing, tented the road, those fields
waiting to reinvent themselves.

Regina deCormier-Shekerjian

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than a decade. That's at least partly because they can't face growing up in their music; they can only doctor their romanticized images. Neil Young, who's a true romantic, isn't afraid of or trapped by time in that way.

Onstage at Madison Square Garden on February 4, two weeks into the eastern leg of his U.S. tour, Young wielded his razor-edged tunes and his howling guitar with possessed abandon while Crazy Horse slammed the deceptively simple beats and chord structures. As fans from ages 12 to 50 watched enraptured, the deliberately rudimentary light show and staging kept the focus on the music. The band ranged over old and new material—including "Cinnamon Girl," a feedback-riddled reworking of Bob Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind" and a handful of old tunes from *Rust Never Sleeps*—seamlessly, sure-footedly, apparently oblivious to all but their billowing gusts of joyful noise. It was a rare and wonderful concert. Don't miss it when it lands in your neighborhood. □

LETTERS.

(*Continued From Page 290*)

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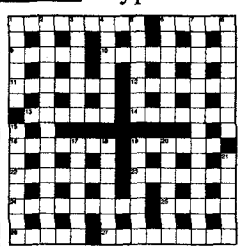

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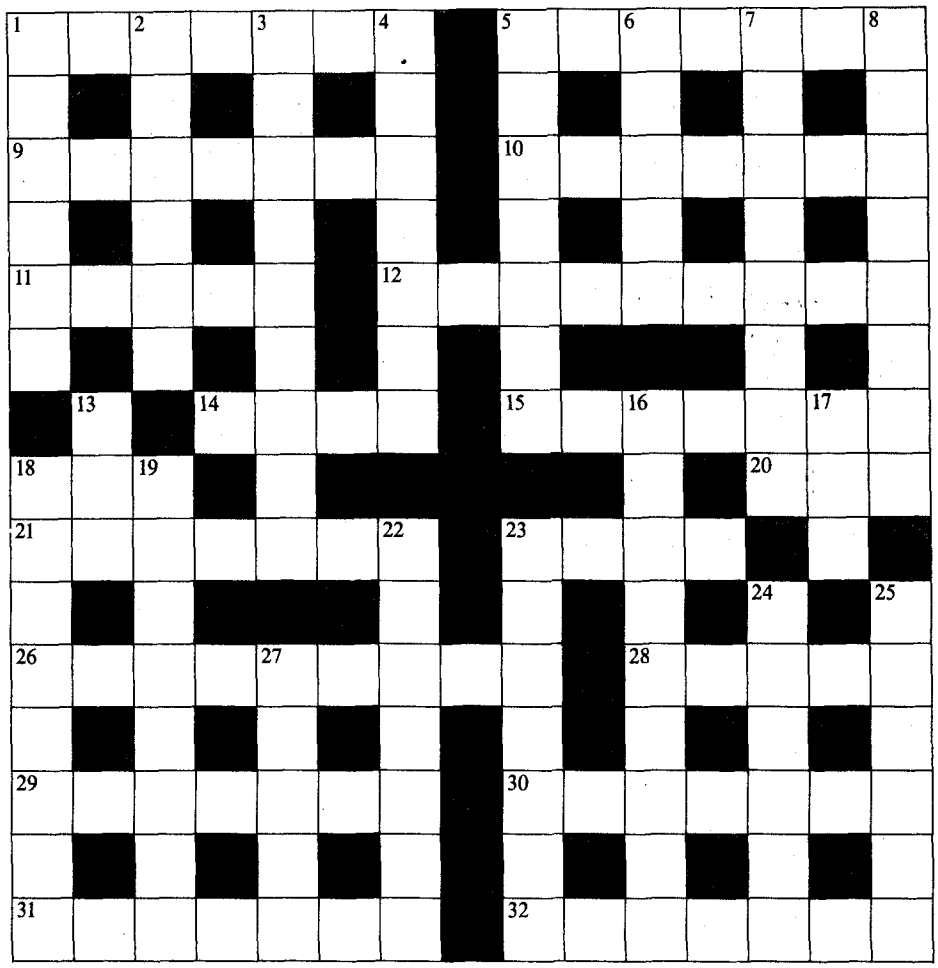
M	I	S	P	R	O	N	O	U	N	C	I	N	G	■
A	■	I	■	E	■	E	■	N	■	H	■	O	■	I
C	A	T	S	P	A	W	■	C	H	A	R	M	E	D
E	■	C	■	U	■	S	■	O	■	I	■	I	■	L
R	H	O	M	B	S	■	E	N	T	R	A	N	C	E
A	■	M	■	L	■	B	■	F	■	■	■	A	■	■
T	■	S	T	I	M	U	L	I	■	H	A	L	E	R
E	■	■	■	C	■	T	■	N	■	E	■	■	■	E
D	U	C	K	S	■	T	H	E	O	R	E	M	■	S
■	■	A	■	■	■	R	■	D	■	B	■	A	■	P
M	U	S	E	T	T	E	S	■	G	A	Z	E	B	O
A	■	T	■	O	■	S	■	P	■	L	■	S	■	N
I	S	L	A	N	D	S	■	A	V	I	A	T	E	S
N	■	E	■	G	■	E	■	I	■	S	■	R	■	E
■	A	S	S	A	S	S	I	N	A	T	I	O	N	S

Crossword Puzzle No. 2327

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 A very loud beginning with know-how could be quite pleasant. (7)
5 They might be raised by angry types. (7)
9 There's something capable of flipping over in the glass! (7)
10 Mr. Trotsky is about to abolish a place possibly associated with cedar. (7)
11 The sort of table 7 supposedly sat at. (5)
12 The miners' outbreak suggests what the old weavers sometimes did. (9)
14 Marking one spell of a Russian ruler. (4)
15 Land, perhaps, with a rebuff for some. (3-4)
18, 20 and 25 down How to address a soldier with an article on dental problems as shown by old-fashioned druggists. (12)
21 Thinks a lot of such people as Paul. (7)
23 Indians seen, but especially herein. (4)
26 Possibly the realities of being an old biblical type. (9)
28 Said when coming or going in a far-out state. (5)
29 and 32 The original owners in a subleasing arrangment or the beginning of words with them. (7,7)
30 They should prove exciting things! (7)
31 The type one might find in the office? (7)
32 See 29

DOWN

1 Like high places associated with the upper crust some years back. (6)
2 Well-known part of a mouse. (6)
3 Describing Ferdinand during the rest of what might disturb the earth. (9)
4 The aural fib gets no G rating nearer the beginning. (7)
5 Jump up and down and about—a different lilt might be a good vantage point. (7)
6 The brace may be shaky, so it could be tossed out in Scotland. (5)
7 Did he forge the weapon quite a bit and use the first part especially? (7)
8 Burns and Matthau were such boys! (8)
13 Do people go this crazy over pea soup? (3)
16 The person who commits a violation, or the one who treats the victim? (9)
17 Does it imply some question of identity of the international organization? (3)
18 It's a creation, depending on whether it's frozen, but not the genuine article. (8)
19 Obvious anger caused by what too much work might do to you! (8)
22 One certainly knows when the beans are! (7)
23 It makes the wrong traffic turn silent, which should be useful. (7)
24 Basic component of a stubborn creature containing a hypothetical force. (6)
25 See 18 across
27 But a sexist doesn't start to be! (5)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

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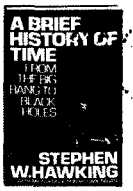

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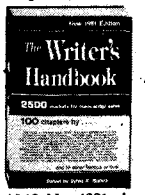

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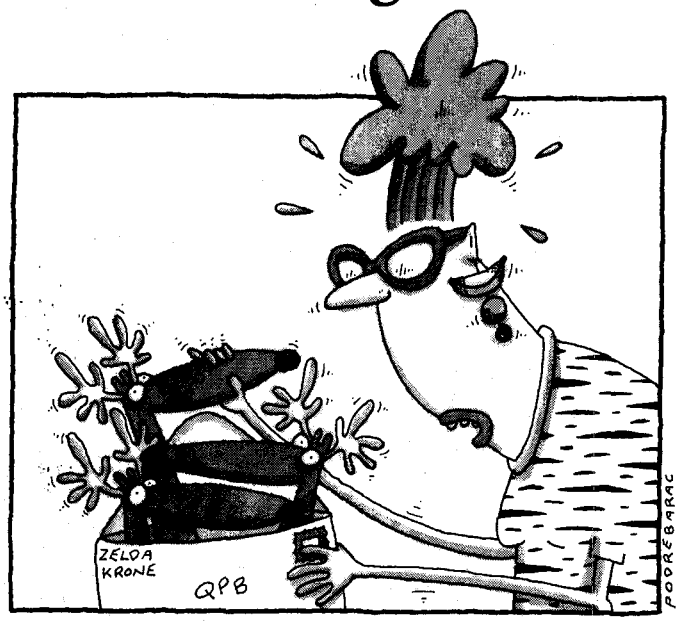

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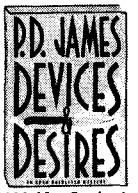

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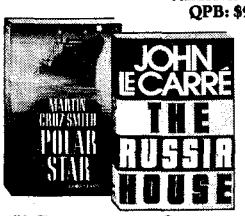

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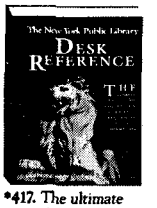

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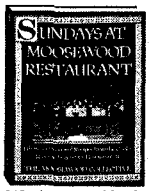

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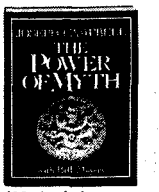

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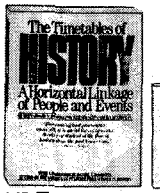

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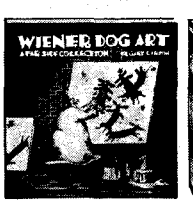

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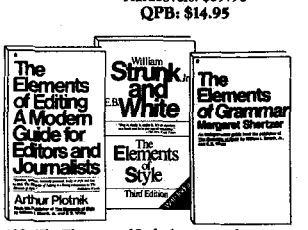
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